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ABSTRACT

This paper is designed to assist education planners and policymakers in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region to identify a range of strategic options to increase the access and retention of girls in the education system. It provides a review of materials relating to the status of female education in the MENA region, statistical data on demographic and economic factors affecting education in the region, and an overview of education in four subsets of nations in the MENA region. The report then discusses 20 educational strategies to improve opportunity for girls. They include: building the political will to reallocate budgets; promoting networks; mobilizing partners; decentralization; reducing opportunity costs to girls' families; having primary schools closer to communities; providing sanitary facilities; sex-segregated schools where appropriate; making schools more accommodating; improving teacher quality; making teachers agents of change; gender-sensitive curricula and teacher training; sufficient textbooks; more female teachers at the secondary level; promoting tolerance; extra-curricular activities; utilizing educational technology; instilling basic skills in out-of-school girls; integrated parent-child education to improve female adult literacy; and promoting female adult literac . Three appendices provide information on workshop participants and strategies to improve educational opportunities for girls. (Contains 182 references.) (MDM)

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Learning for the 21st Century

STRATEGIES FOR FEMALE EDUCATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

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STRATEGIES FOR FEMALE EDUCATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

PREPARED BY
May Rihani

ASSISTED BY
Cynthia J. Prather

Creative Associates International, Inc.
5301 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.
Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20015

PREPARED FOR
UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Office
Amman, Jordan
1993

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Preface

AS THE COUNTRIES OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND North Africa enter the 21st. century, they are facing a future characterised by ever-accelerating processes of change, increasing diversity, complexity and global interdependence - of economies, of communications media, of people in all walks of life.

Faced with these prospects, it is imperative that the region develops and mobilises its resources - human, material and financial - both to assert its place in this interdependent world, and to ensure the protection and development of the rich socio-cultural heritage of the region in tomorrow's global society.

The development of the human potential of the region is its key to the future. There is no doubt that great gains have been made in education in the region in recent decades; female gross enrolment rates at primary level more than doubled between 1960 and 1985. Significant gains were also registered at secondary level.

However, much remains to be done.

The Middle East and North Africa can no longer afford to accept that almost half of the population in the region is illiterate, that 16 out of every one hundred children are not enroled in school - or that, of those enroled, almost nine out of ten do not even complete primary level education.

Amongst the illiterate and unenroled, women are particularly disadvantaged. Only 4 in 10 are literate - 45 million women are illiterate - and girls consistently record lower school enrolment and retention rates than boys.

This book is designed to assist education planners and policy-makers in the MENA region to identify a range of strategic options that might be appropriate, in their specific national settings, to increase the access and retention of girls in the education system, and which will also assist in addressing issues of quality and relevance of learning. Given the considerable variation in conditions in countries of the region, a wide range of strategies, and elements within such strategies, are presented for consideration.

While the focus of this publication is on the promotion of girls' education, readers will find many of the strategic options appropriate also in any discussion of the broader challenges facing the education system - particularly primary education - as a whole.

UNICEF in the Middle East and North Africa places the promotion of girls' education at the top of its priorities, and looks forward to playing its role as a partner with national and regional counterparts, to ensure that Education for All Girls becomes a regional reality in the near future.

Nigel Fisher
DEPUTY REGIONAL DIRECTOR
UNICEF REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA
Amman, Jordan

Acknowledgements

This paper, "Strategies for Female Education in the Middle East and North Africa," was developed through a unique collaborative process with the educational leadership of the UNICEF Regional Office in Amman.

Ed Lannert, Regional Director, and Nigel Fisher, Deputy Regional Director, had the vision and the conviction that every child, and specifically every girl, in the Middle East and North Africa should receive basic learning skills through education. To make this vision a reality, they initiated numerous educational programmes and activities. This study was among them. I gratefully acknowledge their guidance and input as the project team developed the research design, collected and analyzed the data, and formulated the strategies. I also acknowledge their full support and commitment in ensuring that the study fully responds to the specific needs of the MENA region. This paper would not have been possible without their invaluable input and continuous feedback on the several drafts.

I would also like to acknowledge the following people who provided support to this effort:

- Cynthia Prather, my co-author and editor, who worked tirelessly with me in outlining the strategies and refining the concepts;
- Michele Penner, who retrieved the statistics for each of the 21 countries and assisted in identifying the educational indicators of each cluster;
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- the participants of the workshop on Strategies for Female Participation in MENA held in Amman in February 1993, who reviewed the final working draft and guided me in making the report more region-specific; and
- Marie Elsie Sanon, who produced each draft and the final document.

I extend my deepest gratitude to all who contributed.

May Rihani
PROJECT DIRECTOR

Glossary

Acronyms:

GNP	Gross National Product
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
PDRY	People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (former)
ROY	Republic of Yemen
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
UPE	Universal Primary Education
WCEFA	World Conference on Education for All
YAR	Yemen Arab Republic (former)

Definition of Terms:

EDUCATION FOR ALL: refers to the provision of basic education for all children, youth, and adults. Basic education comprises basic literacy and numeracy as well as the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes required by human beings to be able to survive, develop, live, and work in dignity; improve the quality of their lives; make informed decisions; and continue learning (WCEFA 1990).

GENDER GAP: refers to the extent to which female educational access, persistence, and achievement lag behind male access, persistence, and achievement.

GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO: refers to the total enrolment in first level education, regardless of age, divided by the population of the age group which officially corresponds to primary schooling.

GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT: measures the total economic domestic and foreign value claimed by residents and is calculated on an annual basis without making deductions for depreciation (WCEFA 1990).

LITERACY: refers to an individual's ability to read and write. The criteria for qualifying as literate are determined by national authorities.

PERSISTENCE RATES: refer to the percentage of students who begin and complete a particular level of education, that is, the percentage of students that do not drop out.

UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION (UPE): refers to the ultimate goal adopted at the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand, that every child, youth, and adult should benefit from "educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs."

I

Introduction

WHY FEMALE EDUCATION IN MENA?

SINCE THE 1960S, NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS AND private nongovernmental organizations have been working to improve the educational situation and provide education for all in developing countries throughout the world. UNICEF, together with the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, UNESCO, and 156 nations recommitted themselves to these goals during the World Conference on Education for All held in Thailand in 1990. During that conference, participants developed the goal to provide "universal access to basic education and completion of primary education by at least 80 per cent of primary school-age children through formal schooling or nonformal education of comparable learning standard, by the year 2000, with emphasis on reducing current disparities between boys and girls." Basic education was defined as including both "essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy, and problem solving) and the basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes) required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning.[1]" This broader definition of basic education requires an "expanded vision" that encompasses universal access and equity, created in part by targeted efforts to ensure access to, and improve the quality of, education for girls and women. Women should also assist in defining development needs and in sustaining development efforts in individual countries. Education and literacy can help prepare women to serve in those capacities.

In adopting basic education as its top priority until the year 2000, UNICEF established four major educational goals for the 1990s:

- EXPANSION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING APPROPRIATE LOW COST FAMILY- AND COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTIONS;
- UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO BASIC EDUCATION AND ACHIEVEMENT OF PRIMARY EDUCATION BY AT LEAST 80 PER CENT OF PRIMARY SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN THROUGH FORMAL SCHOOLING OR NON-FORMAL EDUCATION OF COMPARABLE LEARNING STANDARD, WITH EMPHASIS ON REDUCING THE CURRENT DISPARITIES BETWEEN BOYS AND GIRLS;
- REDUCTION OF THE ADULT ILLITERACY RATE (THE APPROPRIATE AGE GROUP TO BE DETERMINED IN EACH COUNTRY) TO AT LEAST HALF ITS 1990 LEVEL, WITH EMPHASIS ON FEMALE LITERACY; AND
- INCREASED ACQUISITION BY INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES OF THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND VALUES REQUIRED FOR BETTER LIVING MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH ALL EDUCATIONAL CHANNELS, INCLUDING THE MASS MEDIA, OTHER FORMS OF MODERN AND TRADITIONAL COMMUNICATION, AND SOCIAL ACTION, WITH EFFECTIVENESS MEASURED IN TERMS OF BEHAVIORAL CHANGE.

UNICEF MENA - UNICEF's Middle East and North Africa Region, includes 21 countries in the Mediterranean/Gulf Region.[2] Three hundred and twenty one million people (about one eighth of the world's population) live in this region[3]. Of this number, approximately 160 million - almost half of the region's population - are illiterate, 16 per cent of the children are not enrolled in school, and of those enrolled, approximately 87 per cent do not complete primary level education.[4]

Statistics show that girls in the MENA region make up a disproportionate share of the unreached population. At least 45 million women aged 15 and over are illiterate. The 38 per cent MENA adult female literacy rate is among the lowest in the developing world. Moreover, available data suggest that girls most in need are those in the rural, poor, or most culturally restrictive areas. Promoting girls' education, particularly in the identified areas, therefore is crucial to the accomplishment of UNICEF's educational goals and objectives.

UNICEF has published two policy documents, *Educating Girls and Women: A Moral Imperative* and *Strategies to Promote Girls' Education: Policies and Programmes That Work*, to highlight the importance of girls' education and to promote girls' education and participation throughout the developing world. UNICEF/MENA, as well as other UNICEF regions, are now working to develop action plans for implementing the policy and bringing about the greatest and most lasting gains in the Middle East and North Africa.

Purpose of This Paper

In 1992, UNICEF/MENA commissioned Creative Associates International, Inc. (CAII) to develop a paper to guide the region in improving girls' education. Intended for national and regional policy makers, planners, and program implementors, the paper was to have two major sections: an analytical section to present the current status of female education in MENA and the conditions influencing that status; and a strategies section, to include practical strategies and interventions. Together these two sections would provide national and regional policy makers, planners, and program implementors with the rationale and the steps to take to increase girls' access to educational systems and to improve the quality of what they are learning.

Specifically, the report addresses the following questions:

- WHAT IS THE STATUS OF GIRLS' EDUCATION IN MENA AT THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVELS? HOW DOES THIS STATUS DIFFER THROUGHOUT THE REGION?

- What segments of the MENA female population are not being reached at the primary levels? What are the constraints that keep them from attending and completing primary school?

- What innovative, cost-effective strategies can increase girls' enrolment and persistence in primary school?

- What strategies can be used to provide motivation and basic literacy training to those girls who are not in school?

- How can adult females be trained in a way that encourages participation, knowledge retention, involvement in educational policy and decision-making, and community acceptance?

- What strategies are effective in countries where war and internal conflict have often further contributed to distorted priorities, slashed budgets, disrupted programmes, created poor learning and living environments, and/or demoralized teachers and students?

Methodology

This paper is the outcome of a review of available research and statistical data on MENA. First, background documents obtained through specialized collections and particularly the UNICEF/MENA Regional Office in Amman were reviewed to identify the status of girls' education in the 21 MENA countries. (A bibliography in Chapter VI is provided.) The review focussed on determining the educational status of girls in each country based on the following five indicators: primary gross enrolment rates for boys and girls; the "gender gap" or difference in the percentages of boys and girls who attend primary school; girls' persistence at the primary level; secondary gross enrolment rates for girls; and women's illiteracy rates. Educational needs were then identified based on the status of education. Strategies were developed based on educational needs.

Finally, countries with similar needs were grouped or "clustered" together to simplify the linking of countries and strategies. For each cluster, project staff developed or selected strategies with the following characteristics:

EFFECTIVENESS

Strategies needed to have documented evidence that they have improved enrolment, persistence, and/or achievement in a developing country with similar social, cultural, or economic variables.

APPROPRIATENESS

Strategies needed to be acceptable by the targeted communities and to reflect knowledge of what works within the Middle Eastern culture and its different subcultures.

SUSTAINABILITY

Strategies needed to be structured such that after their initial start-up, they could continue to operate without large infusions of capital, and/or material resources.

REPLICABILITY

Strategies needed to be able to be adapted and replicated for use in many different locations.

PARTICIPATORY PROCESS

STRATEGIES NEEDED TO ACTIVELY INVOLVE THE TARGETED POPULATION, WITH PEOPLE AT THE LOCAL AND GRASSROOTS LEVELS HAVING INPUT WHEREVER POSSIBLE.

A dratt report of the analysis and the recommended strategies was distributed to MENA field staff and senior staff in A.I.D.'s Education and Women in Development Offices. Revisions were made based on the comments provided. The revised report was then reviewed and critiqued by MENA country representatives who attended a regional workshop in Amman in February ot this year. (A list of participants is provided in Appendix A). Final modifications were made based on the feedback provided at the February workshop.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PAPER

In keeping with the recommended study design, this paper has two major parts. The first chapters, which provide the background and analysis for this study, present the situation of female education, particularly girls' education, in the region. Chapter II, Status of Female Education in MENA, defines the groups of females addressed in this paper and describes in general the current status of female education, the constraints to girls' participation, and the benefits of girls' education. Chapter III provides the conceptual framework that guided the plan and the clustering of MENA countries based on the educational status. The second half of the paper includes the practical application of the detailed analysis presented in Chapters II and III. Chapter IV includes 20 proposed strategies and accompanying interventions that will help to increase girls' enrolment and persistence and provide a minimum level of basic learning skills to teenage dropouts and adult female illiterates. Chapter V includes next steps to be taken by individual countries. Conditions for success are also provided.

II

Status of Female Education in MENA

THE STATUS OF GIRLS' EDUCATION AS PRESENTED HERE reflects two important variables: an agreed-upon definition of female education; and the general characteristics of the region. This chapter begins by explaining those variables and then presents the barriers and benefits to education because of them.

What Is Female Education?

For the purposes of this paper, female education addresses educational opportunities for three different groups: girls in school; teenage girls who are out of school; and adult female illiterates. These groups are defined as follows:

GIRLS IN SCHOOL: Girls ages 6-18 who are enrolled in primary or secondary level education. Primary level education is defined as the first six years of education, for girls ages 6-12. Secondary eduction, defined as grades 7-12, includes girls ages 13-18. It should be noted, however, that because of withdrawals and grade repetitions, older girls in many MENA countries are often enrolled at the primary level.

TEENAGE GIRLS WHO ARE OUT OF SCHOOL: Unmarried girls between the ages of 13 and 18 who may or may not have had some education but for cultural, social, and/or economic reasons are not enrolled in school.

FEMALE ADULT ILLITERATES: Women ages 18 and over who cannot read or write. Married girls between the ages of 13 and 18 are also included as adults.

Although there are some shared needs for increased access, persistence, and completion, each group also has its unique needs.

Figure 1

Basic Statistics About MENA and Several Other Regions of the World

Region	Total Population	Average GNP per Capita (US$)	Literacy Rate % (15+)	First Level Gross Enrolment Ratio	Infant Mortality Rate	Total Fertility Rate
MENA	324,406[1] (1990)	4,598[5]❑ (1989)	60[1]❤ (1990)	99[1] (1988)	63[4] (1990)	5.3[4] (1989)
Sub-Saharan Africa	504.3[1] (1990)	639[1]◆ (1990)	47.3[1]☆ (1990)	76.2[1] (1990)	107[3]● (1985-90)	6.4[3]● (1985-90)
Latin America & Caribbean	453[2] (1992)	2,170[2] (1990)	84.7[1]☆ (1990)	109.3[1] (1990)	54[2] (1990)	3.4[2] (1990)
Western Europe	373.4[1] (1990)	16,507[1]▲ (1990)	over 95[5]+ (1992)	104.8[1]◆ (1988)	10[3] (1990)	1.7[3] (1985-90)
North America	283[2] (1992)	21,580[2] (1990)	over 95[5]+ (1992)	102.2[1] (1990)	8.05[5] (1990)	2.0[2] (1990)
World Total*	5,420[2] (1992)	3,790[2] (1990)	73.5[1]☆ (1990)	100.1[1] (1990)	68[2] (1990)	3.3[2] (1990)

* This total is inclusive and therefore includes statistics from regions not listed in this figure

Sources

1. UNESCO 1991
2. Population Crisis Committee, 1992
3. United Nations 1990a
4. UNICEF MENA Regional Office n.d.,a
5. UNICEF MENA Regional Office n.d.,c
6. World Bank 1992a

Exceptions

❤ Oman, the West Bank and Gaza, and Djibouti data are not available
● Sao Tome and Seychelles data are not available. Botswana statistics are from 1988
☆ Projected
◆ Liberia and Namibia data are not available
❑ West Bank and Gaza, Libya, and Yemen's statistics are calculated prior to unification. Y.A.R.'s statistics are from 1983, Jordan's statistics are from 1980
◆ Luxembourg, Monaco, San MArino, and Switzerland data are not available
▲ East Germany
+ Literacy rate is over 95%

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MENA: A Profile

Statistics comparing MENA to other regions of the world in several key areas are provided in Figure 1. A country-by-country statistical summary of the region is provided in Fig.2.

The region is characterized by several important features: its commonalities; its diversity; its emphasis on the military; and its views of women and their roles.

Figure 2

MENA Statistical Summary by Country

Country	GNP[1]	Population[2] (Mil.)	% Population[2] Urban	% Population[2] 0-14 Years
Algeria	2230	25.4	44.7	44.3
Bahrain	6360	.5	82.9	32.7
Djibouti	1210	.4	80.7	48.0
Egypt	640	54.1	48.8	40.9
Iran	3200	56.6	54.9	43.9
Iraq	2340	18.9	74.2	46.2
Jordan	1640	4.3	68.1	47.7
Kuwait	16150	2.1	95.6	38.8
Lebanon	2150	3.0	83.7	35.2
Libya	5310	4.5	70.2	46.0
Morocco	880	25.1	48.5	40.7
Oman	5220	1.5	10.6	46.0
Qatar	15500	.4	89.5	35.3
Saudi Arabia	6020	14.1	77.3	45.2
Sudan	420	25.2	22.0	45.2
Syria	980	12.5	51.8	48.3
Tunisia	1260	8.2	54.3	37.8
Turkey	1370	55.6	48.4	34.4
U.A.E.	18430[4]	1.6	77.8	30.9
West Bank & Gaza Strip	1688.1 RWB 643.3 GS	1045.3 RWB 684.9 GS 154.7 EJ	30 RWB 52 GS 100 EJ	47.4 RWB 49.2 GS 40.5 EJ
Yemen	650	10.5	29.3	47.3

... = Data not available, RWB Remaining West Bank, GS Gaza Strip, EJ East Jerusalem

Sources

1. UNICEF MENA, 1989. Figures represent U.S. dollars.
2. UNESCO *World Education Report*, 1991. Figures are for 1990.
3. Calculated from UNESCO *World Education Report*, 1991. Figures are for 1990.
4. UNESCO *World Education Report*, 1991. Figures are for 1989.
5. Situation Analysis UNICEF Jordan 1992 (rests: 1989)

MENA's Commonalities

Language and religion are two strong unifying factors for most of the MENA region. Eighteen of the 21 countries assessed in this study use Arabic as the official language (the exceptions are Iran, Turkey, and Djibouti), and the majority of the population in each of the 21 countries belongs to the Moslem religion.

These two factors, the homogeneity in language and religion, can be used to enhance basic education. Because of the homogeneity of the language, textbooks and other instructional materials do not have to be written and produced in a variety of languages, and teacher trainers and deployers do not need to be concerned with matching skills with language and geographical needs. The use of a common language facilitates both curriculum development and also teacher training and deployment.

The fact that the majority of the population of the region belongs to Islam can also be used to enhance basic education. Islam advocates education for all as one of its basic principles. This could be built upon within the region to reinforce the importance of basic education.

MENA's Diversity

Although most of the region's people share the same language and religion, MENA is more often characterized by its diversity. A great number of minority ethnic and religious groups inhabit the region. Although Islam is the dominant religion, other religions such as Christianity, Judaism, and Zorasterism also exist in the region. Each of the three non-Arabic speaking countries included in this paper (based on UNICEF's list of MENA countries), has a different official language, and two of them have many minority groups.

Economically, the region is considered a part of the developing world, but national GNPs range from $420 per capita in Sudan[5] to $18,430 per capita in the United Arab Emirates.[6] This wide range exists because the region houses much of one of the world's most valuable natural resources: oil. Four MENA countries—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iran, and Iraq—are the source of more than one fourth of the world's oil production and possess more than half of the world's known oil reserves.[7] These countries are among the wealthiest in the world. For other MENA countries that lack oil or marketable exports, however, people have a meager existence. Because of this disparity, there are significant differences in the resources that countries are able to commit to education.

Geographically, some of the countries, such as Sudan (2,505,814 sq. km) and Algeria (2,381,753 sq. km), are very large; others, like Qatar (22, 015 sq. km) and Kuwait (20,720 sq. km) are very small. National populations range from 1/2 million in Bahrain and Qatar to over 50 million in Egypt, Turkey, and Iran. Much of the region is mountainous and difficult to reach. The region has established urban centers, yet about 40 per cent of the population live in nonurban areas,[8] and nomadic groups dominate some regions. Further, diversity exists even within countries. Algeria, Iraq, Egypt, and Morocco have both thriving cities with the latest technologies and conveniences and also rural areas with thatched-roofed buildings and no electricity or plumbing.

All of these factors influence basic education. Large, growing populations often strain formal educational systems that are unable to expand as quickly as the population they are intended to serve. Rural areas and hard-to-reach regions pose particular challenges in providing schools that are close enough for children, and particularly girls, to attend. Diversity within countries requires school systems to implement a variety of instructional approaches and technologies in order to meet the needs of particular communities.

MENA's Emphasis on the Military

In contrast to both industrial and developing countries, which spent respectively 5.4 and 5.5 per cent of their GNP on the military, MENA spent 12.6 per cent of its GNP on the military (see Figure 3).[9] In 1986, MENA's military expenditures were 166 times those of its expenditures for health or education during that same period.[10] Much of the region is ravaged by war. Regional and national conflicts have depleted important financial and material resources, and diverted national attention away from economic growth and social development, and educational improvements.

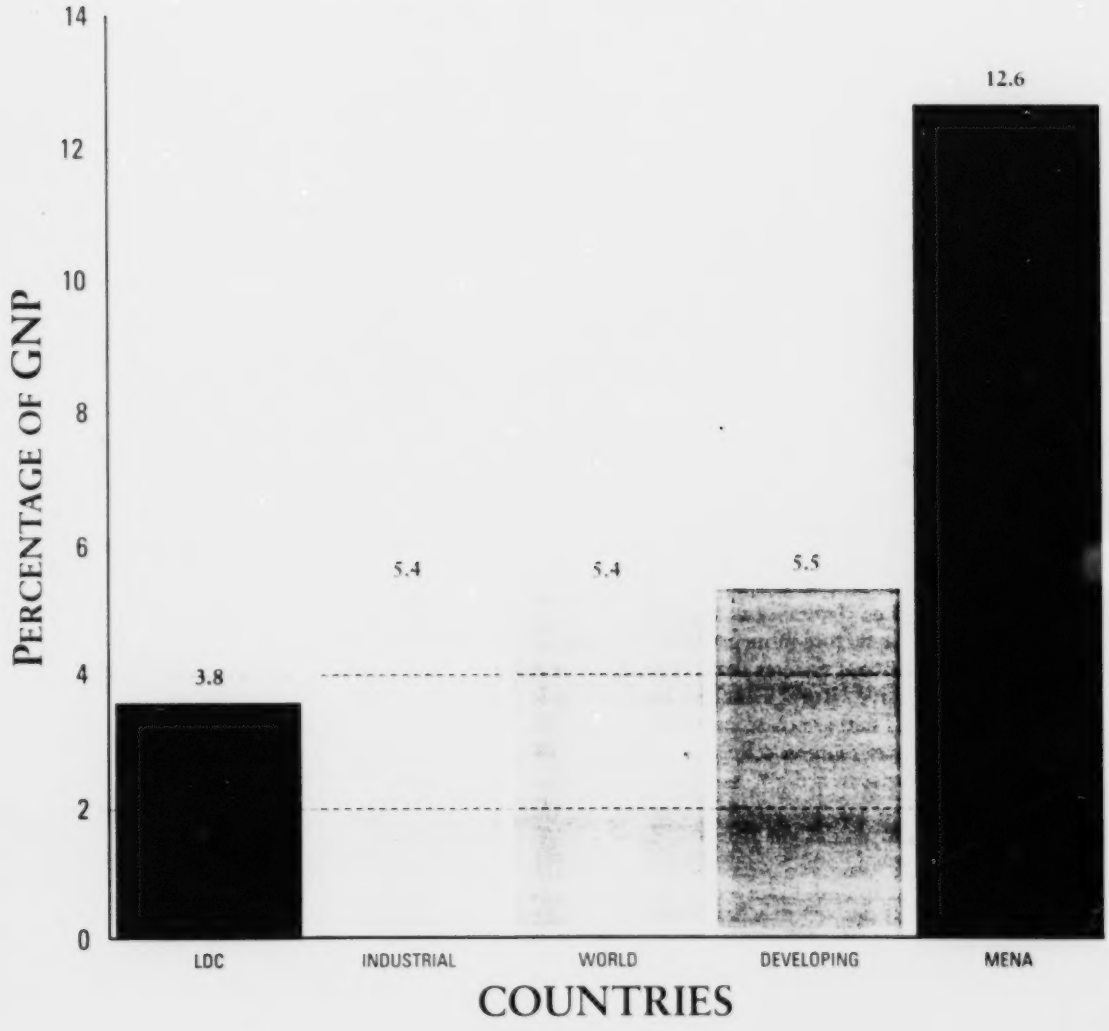
MENA's Views on Women

MENA, like other regions in the world, views the role of women as different than the role of men. In MENA the role of the woman as wife, homemaker, and mother is of paramount importance and precedes all her other roles. Although it is true that in other regions of the developing world, sons are expected to attend school while girls are expected to work at home, marry, and have children, this tradition is most entrenched and established in MENA. Some Middle Eastern cultures expect girls who reached puberty to interact almost exclusively with other girls and women until they are married. In those subcultures, parents restrict the interaction of their daughters with boys and men and hence do not easily accept mixed schools or male teachers for teenage girls. Some parents also fear that western values, often taught in school, might change girls' attitudes and encourage them to challenge and/or reject traditional roles and cultural values.

Three out of these four characteristics - diversity, emphasis on the military, and traditional views of the role of women - combine to make reaching the goal of educating more girls and women a particularly challenging one.

Figure 3

Military Expenditure as a Percentage of GNP



Source:
UNICEF/MENA Regional Office, n.d.
Based on Human Development Report, 1991

THE STATUS OF EDUCATION IN MENA

If we were to use one word to describe the status of basic education and literacy in MENA in general, it would be "improved." Progress has been impressive, not only because of the gains themselves but also because of the swiftness with which the changes occurred, sometimes in countries where educational outcomes were very low. Documented achievements support this statement.

First, national commitment to education for all is evident. Nineteen MENA countries were represented at the Education for All Conference in Jomtien in 1990 where the universal education goals were ratified. The majority of MENA countries have compulsory education policies, many with attendance requirements years beyond primary level completion.[11] Public expenditure on education rose to 6.6 per cent of the region's GNP, with public expenditure per pupil in pre-primary, first, and secondary levels rising from $62 in 1970 to $240 in 1988.

Second, educational participation overall at the primary level has increased. From 1960 to 1990, the number of MENA children, excluding those in Iran, Turkey, and Djibouti, enrolled in primary schools increased from 7 million to 31 million,[12] 443 per cent. From 1970 to 1985, increases in primary enrolment rates in Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Syria ranged from 24 to 31 per cent.[13] Oman made the most significant increases, moving from a 0 per cent gross enrolment rate in 1970 to an 88.5 per cent enrolment ratio by 1985 (see Figure 4). In 1988, 12 MENA countries had reached universal primary education rates (defined as 95 per cent or more gross enrolment) for boys and girls, and two other countries—Egypt, and Kuwait—were close to reaching universal primary education (see Figure 5). UNICEF MENA's latest figures show that almost 84 per cent of all primary school-age children in the region were enrolled in primary school.[14] In addition, the proportion of students completing primary school increased in at least 15 MENA countries since 1975, and the incidence of repetition of first level education declined between 1975 and 1988.

Even though the major finding about the status of education in MENA is that gains have been swift, it is important to note that progress in some MENA countries, such as Djibouti, Yemen, Sudan, and Morocco, has been much slower and sometimes nonexistent. Explanations for the very slow progress in these countries is nearly always correlated with the financing capacities of those countries. Limited progress in these countries is also correlated with social/cultural norms and attitudes. A question needs to be raised concerning the financial capacity within the region and the possibility of greater financial support from oil-rich MENA countries to the educational systems of less-well endowed countries.

THE STATUS OF FEMALE EDUCATION

As is evident in Figures 6 and 7, the status of girls' education improved during the past several decades. Female gross enrolment ratios at the primary level more than doubled, rising from 34.4 per cent in 1960 to 75.2 per cent in 1985. From 1980 to 1988, female primary gross enrolment ratios increased in 12 MENA countries. Female secondary school gross enrolment ratios increased in 14 MENA countries. From 1970-1984, female enrolment in primary education increased almost 50 per cent faster than female primary education enrolment in other developing world countries.[15]

Based on selected research and on the statistics cited in those studies, some countries actually closed or eliminated the gap in girls' and boys' education. Bahrain, Kuwait, and Qatar, three oil-rich countries with gender gaps from 24-30 percentage points in 1970, closed the between 1-3 percentage points by 1985 (see Figure 8). U.A.E., a country with a gap in male and female gross enrolment of 41 points in 1970 completely eliminated that gap by 1985. Jordan eliminated its gender gap by 1980 and offers education equally to girls and boys. Although the war in Lebanon, which lasted from 1975 to 1990, had a negative impact on primary public school enrolment, statistics show that little or no gender gap existed before and during the war.[16]

In 1960, Lebanon was the only state that had achieved universal primary enrolment for both sexes. The majority of countries had gross enrolment ratios below 50 per cent, while Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Syria, and Tunisia all had rates between 50 and 80 per cent.[17] By 1988, however, the number of countries having achieved universal primary enrolment included Iraq, Bahrain, Tunisia, Jordan, Oman, Qatar, U.A.E., Kuwait, and Syria, in addi-

Figure 4

MENA Gross Enrolment Ratios, Primary Education Over a Period of 23 Years

Country	1965	1975	1985	1988	% Change in Gross Enrolment Rates
Algeria	67.7	92.7	93.0	96.0	28.3
Bahrain	***	***	112.0[1]	110.0	-2.0
Djibouti	***	***	***	46.0	***
Egypt	71.7	75.0	87.7	90.0	18.3
Iran	63.4	93.2	107.0	116.0	52.6
Iraq	73.8	93.6	99.0	96.0	22.2
Jordan	95.0[2]	***	104.0[3]	***	9.0
Kuwait	117.2	92.8	96.0	93.0	-24.2
Lebanon	110.6	106.4	111.8	125.0	14.4
Libya	78.0[2]	***	***	***	***
Morocco	56.7	62.0	83.0	67.0	10.3
[illegible]	[illegible]	44.0	88.5	101.0	101.0
[illegible]	***	***	124.0[1]	117.0	7.8
[illegible] Arabia	33.7	57.5	69.4	71.0	37.3
[illegible]	22.2	36.8	49.8	49.0	18.8
[illegible]	69.8	95.8	108.4	110.0	40.4
Tunisia	81.2	97.4	116.4	113.0	21.8
[illegible]	100.8	107.8	113.3	113.0	12.1
[illegible]	[illegible]	101.3	95.0	104.0	104.0
West Bank & Gaza	***	***	***	89[4]	***
[illegible]	26.8	51.0	70.2	***	43.6
[illegible]	[illegible]	28.8	82.3	82.0	[illegible]

››› Data not available

Sources:

Lockheed, M.E., and A.M. Verspoor. *Improving Primary Education in Developing Countries, a review of policy options*, 1990.

1 Kudat, A., and H. Abadzi 1989.
2 World Bank, *World Development Report*, 1989.
3 UNESCO, *World Education Report*, 1991. Figures are for 1980.
4 Lockheed 1990. Figures are for 1970.
5 UNWRA Statistical Yearbook. 1989-1990. Registered refugee population only.

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Figure 5

Summary of educational Indicators for MENA Countries

Country	1989, GNP (in US$)[1]	Gross Primary Enrolment[2] Rates for Boys and Girls, 1988 (%)	Gross Primary Enrolment[2] Rates for Girls, 1988 (%)	Gender Gap, Primary Level, 1988 (%)[2]	Girls' Persistence,[2] 1987 (%)	Gross Secondary Enrolment[2] Rates for Girls, 1988 (%)	Women's Illeracy,[1] 1990 (%)
Algeria	2230	96	87	18	86	53	54
Bahrain	6360	110	108	3	96	83	31
Djibouti	1210	46	39	15	89(M+F)	13[4]	91
Egypt	640	90	79	21	79	58	66
Iran	3200	116	109	14	88	44	57
Iraq	2340	96	87	17	49	37	51
Jordan	1640	104 (1980)	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	84	73(1980)	30
Kuwait	16150	93	91	3	90	79	33
Lebanon	2150	125	94[4]	10(1984)[3]	☆☆☆	56[4]	27
Libya	5310	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	77	☆☆☆	50
Morocco	880	67	53	27	63	34	62
Oman	5220	101	95	10	84	73	83[3]
Qatar	15500	117	116	2	94	85	28(1986)
Saudi Arabia	6020	71	65	13	94	35	52
Sudan	420	49	40	17	76(M+F)	17	88
Syria	980	110	104	11	87	47	49
Tunisia	1260	113	105	16	77	38	44
Turkey	1370	113	109	8	96	37	29
U.A.E.	18430	104	104	0	95	68	62
West Bank & Gaza	1688.1[RWB] 693.3[GS]	89.0[5]	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	44
P.D.R.Y	430	66(1983)	35 (1983)	61(1983)	☆☆☆	11(1983)	70(est.1990)
Y.A.R.	540[2]	92	42	98	74(M+F)	7	79

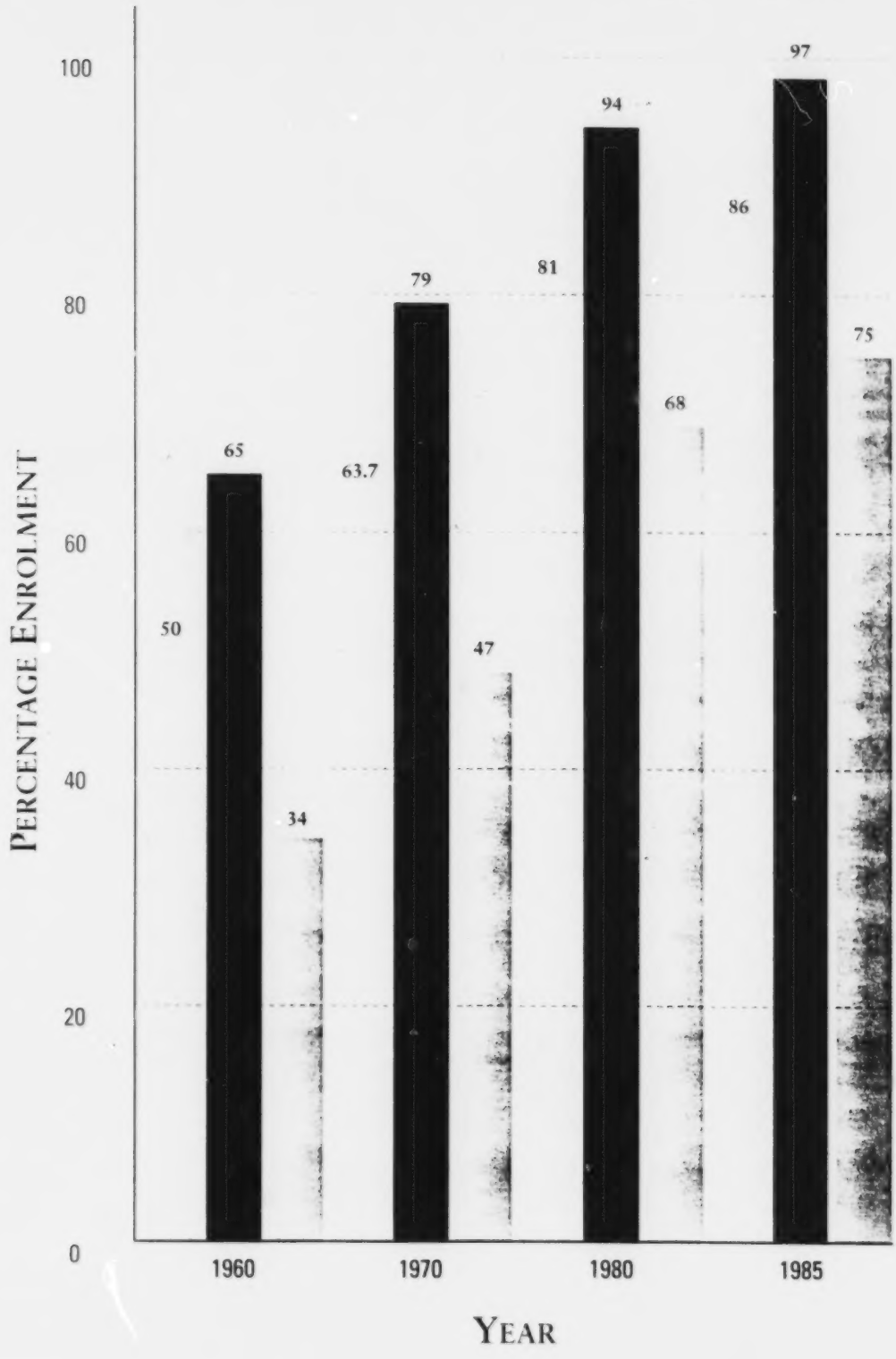
☆☆☆ Data not available. RWB: Remainder West Bank. GS: Gaza Strip

Sources

1. UNICEF MENA Regional Office, n.d.,c
2. UNESCO 1991
3. UNICEF MENA Regional Office, n.d.,a
4. World Bank 1992a
5. UNRWA Statistical Yearbook 1989-1990. Registered refugee population only.

Figure 6

Primary Gross Enrolment Ratio for Arab States, 1970-1985



Source:

Figure 7

Change in Female Enrolment in MENA at Both the Primary and Secondary Levels

Country	Female Primary Gross Enrolment Ratios		Female Secondary Gross Enrolment Ratios	
	1980	1988	1980	1988
Algeria	81	87	26	53
Bahrain	97	108	58	83
Djibouti	☆☆☆	39[2]	☆☆☆	13[2]
Egypt	65	79	41	58
Iran	72	109	☆☆☆	44
Iraq	109	87	38	37
Jordan	102	☆☆☆	73	☆☆☆
Kuwait	100	91	76	79
Lebanon	106	94[2]	57	56[2]
Libya	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆
Morocco	63	53	20	30
Oman	42	95	7	34
Qatar	106	116	68	85
Saudi Arabia	50	65	23	35
Sudan	41	40	12	17
Syria	89	104	36	47
Tunisia	88	105	20	38
Turkey	90	109	24	37
U.A.E.	88	104	48	68
West Bank & Gaza	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆	☆☆☆
Y.A.R. (former)	11	42	1	7
P.D.R.Y. (former)	36	☆☆☆	11	☆☆☆

☆☆☆ Data not available

Sources

1. UNESCO 1991
2. World Bank *Social Indicators of Development 1991-1992*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992b.

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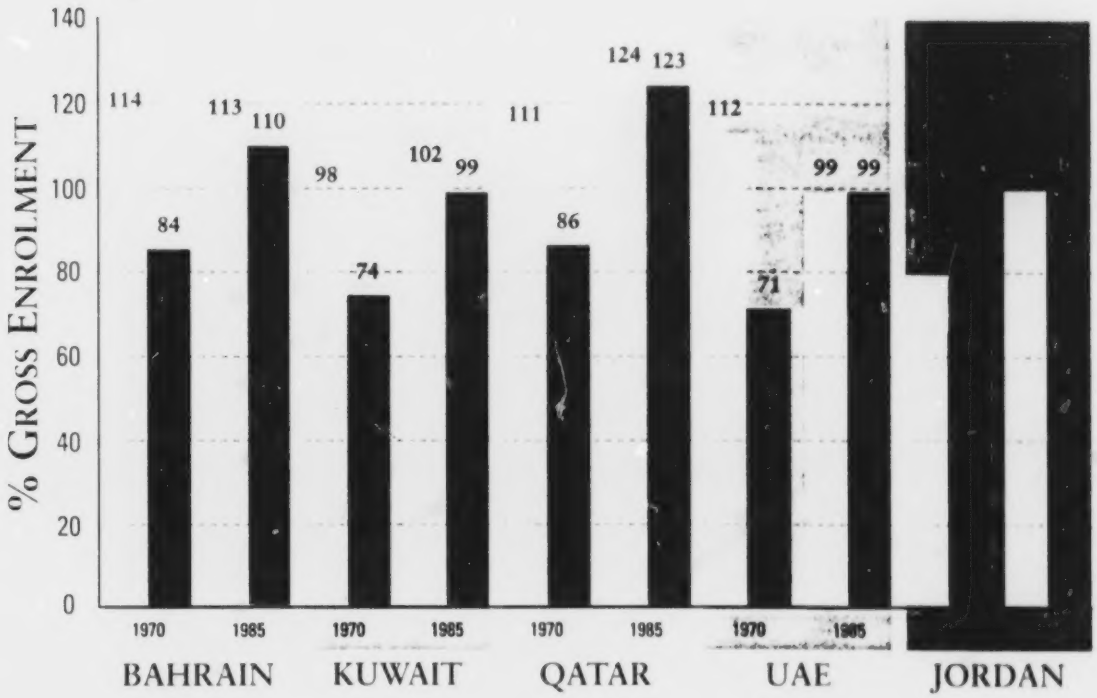
Figure 8

Closing the Gap in Primary Education



Source:
Kudat, A. and Abadzi, 1989

Figure 9

Educational Progress in Oman

Educational Indicators	1970-1979	1980-1987	1988-1989
Female Gross Enrolment Ratio at Primary Level	24%[c] (1975)	42%[e] (1980)	95%[e] (1988)
Percentage of Girls in Primary Level	14%[b] (1970)	44.1%[e] (1985/86)	46.5%[d] (1985-86)
Number of Educational Institutions (General Education System)	3[d] (1970)	-	703[d] (1988/89)
Percentage of Female Teachers at the Primary Level	-	34%[e] (1980)	46%[e] (1988)

Sources

a. UNESCO 1991
b. Massialas, B., and J. Samir. *Education in the Arab World*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1983.
c. Strickland, S. "The Participation of Near Eastern Women in USAID's Participation and Training Program," 1989.
d. UNICEF Oman 1990.
e. Kudat, A., and H. Abadzi 1989.

Figure 10

Progress in MENA's Adult Female Literacy

Country	Adult Female Literacy Rates (%)		Change in Female Adult Literacy Rates 1985-1990
	1985[1]	1990[2]	
Algeria	37	46	9
Bahrain	***	69	***
Djibouti	***	15	***
Egypt	30	34	4
Iran	39	43	4
Iraq	87	49	-38
Jordan	63	70	7
Kuwait	63	67	4
Lebanon	69	73	4
Libya	50	50	***
Morocco	22	38	16
Oman	12	***	***
Qatar	***	***	***
Saudi Arabia	31	48	17
Sudan	14	12	2
Syria	43	51	8
Tunisia	41	56	15
Turkey	62	71	9
U.A.E.	38	***	***
West Bank & Gaza	***	***	***
Y.A.R. (former)	3	26	23
P.D.R.Y. (former)	25	26	1

*** Data not available

Sources

1 World Conference on Education for All. *Meeting Basic Learning Needs: A Vision for the 1990s*. New York: Inter-Agency Commission for the World Conference on Education for All, 1990.

2 UNESCO 1991

tion to Lebanon.[18] It is important to note that universal primary enrolment for both sexes does not mean that equal percentages of boys and girls are enrolled.

Again, Oman made the most significant changes. When the national education programme was begun in 1970, Oman had only three boys' schools with 909 students. By the 1988/89 school year, Oman had a total of 703 schools (primary through secondary) and 294,934 students, with significant percentages of girls enrolled (46 per cent enrolment at the primary level and 51 per cent at the secondary level).[19] Most of the country's educational progress is attributed to a strong political will to improve the educational status of Oman accompanied by appropriate budget allocations. Figure 9 illustrates the progress that Oman made between 1970 and 1989.

Estimated adult female literacy increased from 13.2 per cent in 1970 to 31.5 per cent in 1985.[20] In 1990, Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, and Turkey had adult female literacy rates of at least 66 per cent (see Figure 10).

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Despite this progress, however, the figures previously presented also show that there is still much that needs to be done in the area of girls' education.

- *There is a wide disparity in the education provided in the region.* In 1988, gross primary enrolment rates ranged from 117 per cent in Qatar to 49 per cent in Sudan. Children in high income families are more likely to be better educated than children from low income families. Urban dwellers are more likely to receive an education than rural dwellers. Using the most current statistics and UNESCO's 1991 estimates, 10 countries should reach universal primary education, while four countries in the Arab world will not reach 95 per cent gross enrolment by the year 2000.

- *There is a gender gap in primary enrolment.* Even though the gender gap has either narrowed radically or been eliminated in some countries, i.e., Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, U.A.E., Jordan, and Lebanon, throughout the region more boys than girls are enrolled in primary school. For the ten countries that reached universal primary education for boys and girls in 1988, all except four had larger percentages of school-age boys attending school than girls. Several countries—Morocco, Sudan, and both Yemens—had from 47 to 64 percent of its girls who did not attend primary school. Despite high overall primary enrolment rates, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Egypt, and Iraq still had enrolment gaps of 13 to 21 percent at the primary level.

- *For those children who are enrolled, quality is an issue.* Children who complete primary school in many developing countries perform at less than two-thirds the level of content mastery of their counterparts in industrialized countries.[21] A variety of factors, including inadequate facilities and instructional materials, lack of sufficient numbers of qualified teachers, and dated curricula and teaching methodologies, all limit the instructional quality.

- *Girls are still dropping out.* Although in 1987 several countries had girls' persistence rates of at least 90 per cent,[22] in seven other countries at least one fifth of the girls did not complete primary school.[23]

- *There is also a gender gap at the secondary level.* Although the primary female gross enrolment rate reached desired levels in almost 60 per cent of the MENA countries, less than half of the females in 11 MENA countries were enrolled in secondary school. In nine MENA countries in 1988 there was a difference of at least 10 points in the percentages of males and females who were enrolled in secondary school. In three of those countries, the difference was over 20 per cent.

- *Female adult illiteracy remains high.* In 1990 at least half of the adult women in 12 MENA countries[24] were illiterate.[25] Although the illiteracy rate has decreased, the actual numbers of illiterate females have increased. If reductions in adult female illiteracy continue at their current rate, only one MENA country will reach its Education for All goal for adult literacy by the year 2000.

Clearly, these areas must be addressed if the goal of education for all is to become a reality. Addressing them first requires an understanding of the constraints that contribute to their existence.

CONSTRAINTS TO FEMALE EDUCATION IN MENA

The constraints to girls' and women's education in MENA can be organized into four categories: educational, economic, cultural/social, and political.

Education Constraints

These constraints affect the provision of education and are related primarily to the availability and accessibility of school and education to girls. The absence of schools, spaces within the schools, teachers, books, materials, and equipment all can contribute to lower girls' enrolment. In addition, distance from school has been found to affect girls' enrolment. Research in rural Egypt has shown that when school is beyond one kilometer from the child's home, girls tend to drop out of school at a significantly higher rate than boys (Robinson, Makary, and Rugh 1987; see Strategy 3 of this paper, "Build Schools Closer to Communities," for more details). In rural areas, where girls are more likely to lose class time due to agricultural or households chores, girls may drop out to avoid repeating or catching up. The absence of female teachers is also a major constraint, particularly at the secondary level. Countries such as Oman with large numbers of female teachers tend to have higher girls' enrolment, while countries such as Yemen with the lowest number of female teachers have the lowest enrolment for girls.

Other constraints are related to the actual instruction. Outdated teaching methodologies, where information is presented through traditional, large group lectures and rote memorization, have not yet given way to more modern approaches of learner-centered instruction, democratic teaching-learning methodologies, cooperative learning, and creative problem solving. Content is often difficult and irrelevant to today's needs. Although pilot tested in individual countries, educational technology is not used widely in providing and complementing instruction. Curricula too often neglect pressing vocational, technological, environmental, and survival issues. Students drop out due to loss of interest, lack of quality, and failure.

A third set of educational constraints is related to the administrative structure. Most systems are very centralized, with major decisions made by a few key leaders. Parents, local teachers and administrators, and community members have little influence over the educational planning or decision-making processes.

Economic Constraints

Girls also are likely to be out of school for economic reasons. In a recent study of girls' persistence and teacher incentives in primary education in Uganda (Fleuret 1991), both parents and student dropouts listed lack of money for fees as the primary reason for dropping out of school and named scholarships, uniforms, books, and reduced fees as the most important incentives for school persistence. For many families in MENA the direct costs of school supplies, materials, and transportation far outweigh the benefits of having girls educated. In lower-income countries and agricultural regions (i.e., Yemen, Sudan, rural Morocco, rural Tunisia, and rural Algeria) the loss of girls' labor in the home and the field is an opportunity cost that families cannot afford. For others, where the demand for domestic help is greater than for skilled or educated workers, education is considered unimportant because of the lack of utility. There is no earning ability. The unavailability and/or inaccessibility of credit sources for women also discourages women in micro-enterprises and further limits women's views of the usefulness of extended education.

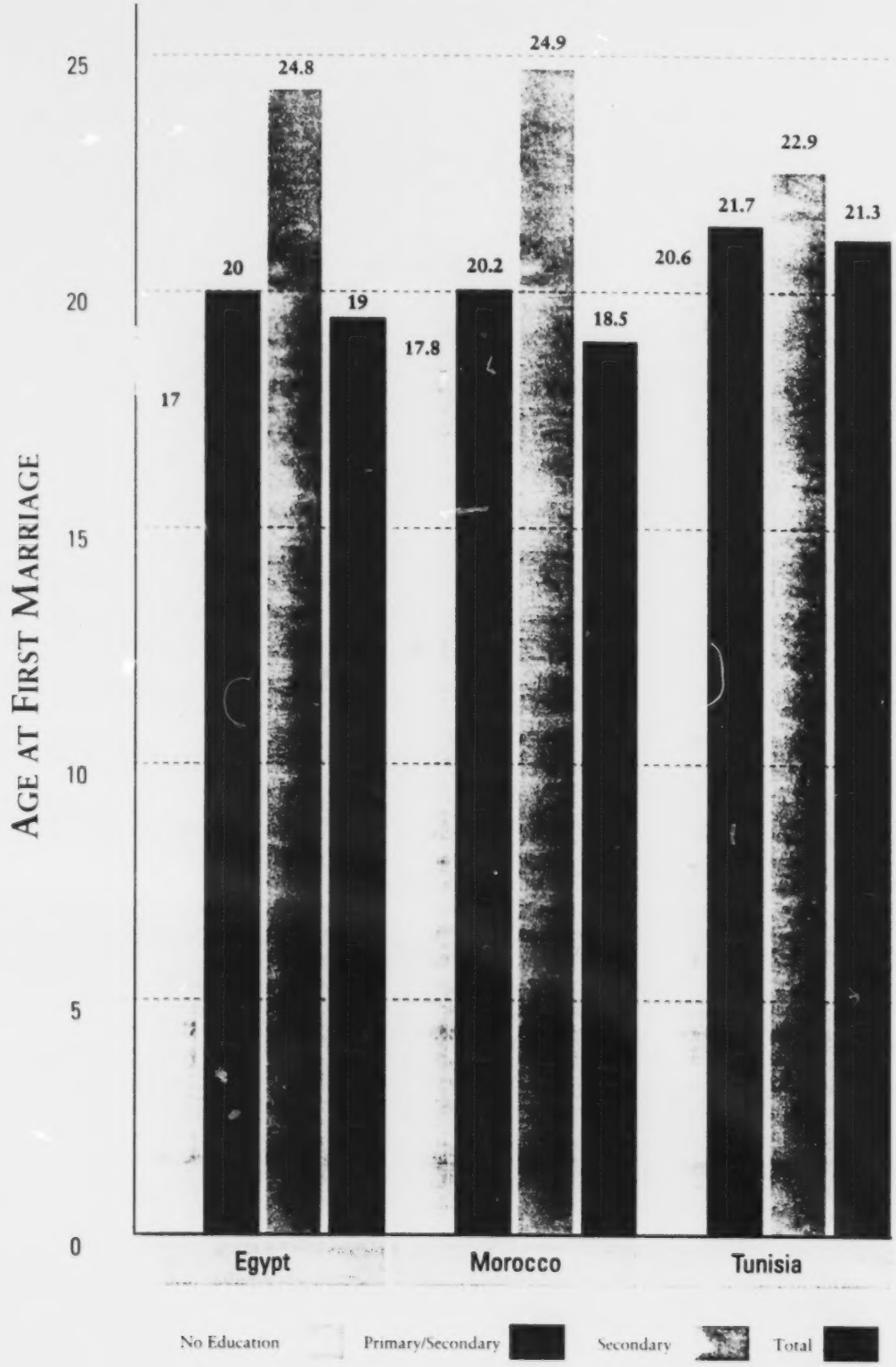
At a higher level, national economies, political priorities, and budget allocations influence how well educational programmes are funded. While monies were available in the 1970s, economic setbacks have stifled and now sometimes threaten previous gains. (Countries are seeing the monies become less as the demand for education increases.)

Cultural Constraints

Cultural factors in MENA can have a significant influence on girls' participation. Fleuret's study (1991) shows that in addition to financial constraints, parent reluctance is an important deterrent to girls' persistence. In many cultures, communities, specifically rural ones, do not value the importance of education for girls for its own sake, and poor educa-

Figure 11

Differential in Average Age of Marriage, By Education



Source:
Demographic Health Survey

tional quality only complicates the issue, particularly for girls. In addition, when daughters reach puberty, many parents find mixed-sex classrooms and male teachers undesirable. Age of marriage is also a factor. Marriageability of girls at an early age is important in several cultures and takes priority over keeping girls in school. On the other hand, UNICEF/MENA statistics show that in Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia the average age of marriage increased with the education level of the girls (see Figure 11). Tunisia, by raising the marriage age to 17 in 1956,[26] we believe, had positive implications on the persistence of girls in upper primary and lower secondary schools.

Another cultural constraint is the overall low status of women in MENA societies. Women have limited involvement in national, community, and family decisions and rarely have a role in setting policy, even in areas that may directly affect them. Male decision-makers may not value female participation at the learning or decision-making levels. Limited female educational participation and persistence, a relatively early marriage age, and lack of input in policy-making all contribute to an inter-generational cycle of female illiteracy that is hard to break.

In a region long characterized by political and religious struggles for survival, national and religious identities and cultural traditions are given primary importance. While cultural nuances should be acknowledged and respected, there is also a recognized need for programmes that promote change when universal human rights are violated.[27]

Political Constraints

The political context in MENA can have a significant impact on education in general and girls' education in particular. Political visions, priorities, and approaches often determine the direction and purpose of educational systems. In addition to political visions and priorities, the political environment also impacts in a fundamental way on educational systems. Major events and activities resulting from the political situation such as civil wars, political violence, armed conflicts, economic sanctions, totalitarianism, and instability have temporary but often serious impacts on female education and specifically on girls' access to and retention in schools. Many countries within the MENA region either witnessed or continue to witness prolonged armed conflicts; those countries' educational systems suffer from decreased resources, destruction of a portion of their educational infrastructure, brain-drain of their teaching cadres, insecurity that affects the access of children and particularly girls to school, and continuous interruptions of the teaching/learning process. Moreover, due to the macropolitical situation, the entire region tends to be conflict-prone, often resulting in the chronicity of violence.

As a result of the extended violence, MENA's children face unique challenges. In 1991, 42.1 million children 15 years old or younger were living in areas of armed and ethnic conflict where the educational systems suffered severe damage.

Benefits of Female Education in MENA

Increasing and improving girls' educational participation benefits individuals, communities, and nations. In addition to helping individual countries reach their goals of universal primary education for all, girls' education has a positive impact on several areas:

ECONOMIC PRODUCTIVITY:
Girls' education contributes positively to economic well-being. Whether they participate in the formal or informal sectors, are self-employed, or work in the home, educated women are more likely to contribute economically to their families, villages, and communities. At the national level, research shows a positive correlation between primary enrolment and GNP per capita. Large gender gaps in education generally correlate with lower GNPs (e.g., Morocco, Egypt, the Yemen Arab Republic, PDRY, and Sudan; see Figure 12).

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:
Educated women generally marry later in life and are more likely to have smaller families than those women who are not educated. Mother's education often leads to lower fertility rates, lower infant/child mortality rates, and longer life expectancy. Statistics show that there is a relationship between the number of years of female schooling and child survival. Each added year of schooling for the mother

results in a decrease of mortality among children by 5-10 per cent.[28] The higher the level of female education, the higher the chances of the child's survival.[29] Women's literacy not only affects the health and well-being of children and families but also influences the health and well being of the women themselves. Nations that have invested heavily in female primary education have longer life expectancies for women and men. In wage employment, the returns to education can be equal to or larger than those for men.[30]

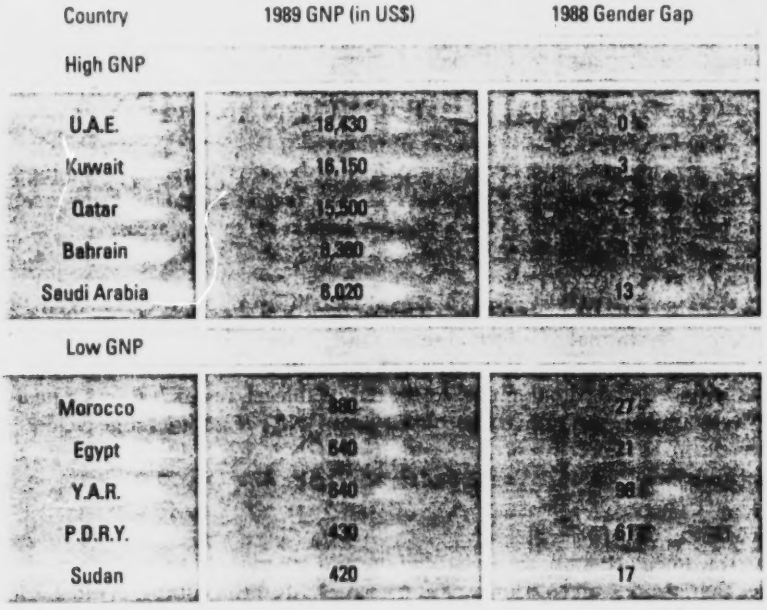
INTERGENERATIONAL EDUCATION:
Educated women value education more and are more likely to educate their children, particularly their daughters. This multiplier effect helps to ensure that once initiated, girls' education will be self-supporting.

SOCIAL EQUITY:
By making women more aware, knowledgeable, productive, and sometimes wage earning, education increases women's self esteem and better prepares them to play a more constructive and participatory role in the family and the community.

SUSTAINABILITY OF DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS:
With the acquisition of basic skills and an introduction to new concepts and processes, educated women are more likely to consider and participate in health, nutrition, water and sanitation, and other environmental efforts.

Given the many benefits, the challenge facing education planners in MENA countries is how to overcome the barriers to educational opportunity for women so that these benefits can be realized.

Figure 12
Relationship of MENA GNP and Gaps in Boys' and Girls' Enrolment at the Primary Level



Source
UNESCO 1991

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Supply/Demand Paradigm

Children's participation in schools is the result of two variables: supply and demand. Supply elements, which includes such things as number of schools, number of school places available within particular schools, number of textbooks, and numbers of teachers, must be in place so that instruction can be provided. While supply factors are necessary conditions, they are not always sufficient. Although parents are more reluctant to send their children to school if there are no materials or not enough teachers, other factors affect the demand, or desire, for education. Parents' decisions to invest in schooling depend on their perception and/or understanding and calculation of the private rate of return of education. Parents assess whether the benefits to the daughter and the family outweigh the costs to the family. Household and family structure, societal characteristics, and cultural beliefs as well as costs all influence the demand for education. Compulsory education and available school places provide the opportunity for participation, but parent, and to a lesser extent, student desire ultimately determine whether a girl will enrol, attend, and excel.

Educational barriers also relate to either supply or demand. Historically, it was assumed that because schooling was a social good, once the supply was established, all parents would send all of their children to school. Issues around the nature of the supply, e.g., more female teachers, were not fully analyzed to assess their impact on demand and their relationship to the educational barriers.

It is important to note that supply and demand factors cannot be isolated from each other. The interaction between the set of factors influencing supply and demand determines the degree of girls' participation in schools. As summarized by UNICEF, "The greatest success in reducing gender disparities in education happens in those countries where the political will for change at the very top levels of government is matched by a demand from parents and communities."[31]

Regional Variations

Clustering MENA Countries by Educational Status

For this study, several sets of statistics were used to evaluate women's education in MENA: female gross enrolment ratios; gender gaps in primary enrollments; girls' completion rates at the basic education level; female gross enrolment ratios at the secondary level; and adult female illiteracy rates.

Using these statistics, with a particular focus on basic education, the MENA countries were organized into four clusters. The clustering was based on similarities among countries in trends in educational performance. Although they are not meant to be permanent classifications, the clusters do reflect, at this point in time, similar educational status for the countries in a particular cluster. Countries in each cluster have shown comparable progress and accomplishments in female education and face similar challenges for the future. Countries in each cluster might be able to trace the causalities of the comparable progress to either similar socio-economic conditions or to similar educational policies despite the conditions.

The countries were clustered as follows:

- •Cluster One: Qatar, Turkey, Bahrain, U.A.E., Jordan, Oman, and Kuwait;
- •Cluster Two: Tunisia, Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, and Libya;
- •Cluster Three: Morocco, Sudan, Yemen, Djibouti; and
- •Cluster Four: Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza.

This grouping follows neither the traditional geographic subregions (Maghreb, Levant, etc.) nor the relative national income levels, for the data show that neither geographical location nor GNP accurately predict the success of MENA nations' efforts to educate women. The clusters also do not follow cultural divisions. For example, cluster two includes both secular Tunisia and Saudi Arabia, which conscientiously adheres to Islamic Law. Rather, the clusters are based on national trends in educational performance. The first three categories were formed solely on the basis of relevant education statistics; the fourth, "war-torn" group was designated in order to acknowledge and address the special needs of girls and women in areas of conflict. A summary of the clusters is provided in Figure 13. A description of the educational status of each cluster and the related needs based on the educational status follow.

Figure 13

Summary of Educational Indicators for MENA Countries, by Cluster

Cluster	1989, GNP (in US$)[1]	Gross Primary Enrolment Rates for Boys and Girls, 1988 (%)[2]	Gross Primary Enrolment Rates for Girls, 1988 (%)[2]	Gender Gap, 1988 (%)[2]	Girls' Persistence, 1987 (%)[2]	Gross Secondary Enrolment Rates for Girls, 1988 (%)[2]	Women's Illiteracy, 1990 (%)[2]
CLUSTER ONE							
Qatar	15,500	117	116	2	94	85	28
Turkey	1,370	113	109	8	96	37	29
Bahrain	6,360	110	108	3	96	83	31
U.A.E.	18,430	104	104	0	95	68	62
Jordan	1,640	104	102	3	84	73	30
Oman	5,220	101	95	10	89	34	48
Kuwait	16,150	93	91	3	90	79	33
CLUSTER TWO							
Tunisia	1,260	113	105	16	77	38	44
Syria	980	110	104	11	87	47	50
Egypt	640	90	79	21	79	58	66
Saudi Arabia	6,020	71	65	13	94	35	52
Algeria	2,230	96	87	18	86	53	55
Libya	5,310	***	119	***	77	***	50
CLUSTER THREE							
Morocco	880	87	53	27	63	30	62
Sudan	420	49	40	17	76	17[4]	66[4]
Y.A.R.	640	92	42	98	74(M+F)	7	74[4]
P.D.Y.R.	430	66	35	61	***	11	61
Djibouti	1,210	54	39	***	89(M+F)	13[4]	86[4]
CLUSTER FOUR (War-Torn Countries)							
Iran	3,200	116	109	14	88	44	57
Iraq	2,340	96	87	17	49	37	51
Lebanon	2,150	125	94	10(1984)	***	56[4]	27
West Bank & Gaza	RWB 1,688 GS 693	89	***	***	***	***	44

*** Data not available (RWB: remainder West Bank; GS: Gaza Strip)

Sources

1. UNICEF MENA Regional Office, n.d.c.
2. UNESCO 1991
3. UNICEF MENA Regional Office, n.d.a.
4. World Bank 1992a

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CLUSTER ONE COUNTRIES

OVERVIEW

Cluster one includes the small, oil-rich MENA states of Qatar, Bahrain, U.A.E., Oman, and Kuwait as well as the larger and less wealthy Jordan and Turkey. With the exception of Oman and Turkey, these are predominantly urban countries; less than one-third of their populations live in rural areas. With the exception of Turkey, all have populations of less than 5 million people. Several of these countries allocate significant percentages of its national resources to the military: U.A.E. allocated 8.8 per cent of its GNP in 1986; in that same year, Oman allocated 27.6 per cent.

EDUCATIONAL STATUS

Educationally, the vast majority of girls in cluster one attain basic education. Gross enrolment ratios for girls and boys are at least 90 per cent, and the difference between boys' and girls' primary school attendance is 10 per cent or less. Girls' persistence rates at the primary level are also high. (Statistics can be misleading, however. Even in countries with high enrolment rates and minimal gender gaps, female literacy can still be a problem. Also, educational quality and relevance are important issues.) Girls' secondary enrolment rates are the highest in the region, although they are still an average of 38 per cent below the primary enrolment rates, with differences in primary and secondary enrolment rates ranging from 12 per cent in Kuwait to 61 per cent in Oman and 72 per cent in Turkey. With the exception of U.A.E. and Oman, female adult literacy rates are the highest in the region. Despite this showing, however, approximately one of every three women ages 15 and older in cluster one cannot read or write. In Jordan, for example, where there is a minimal gender gap at the primary level, the female illiteracy rate is 23.5 per cent but only 5.2 per cent for males. U.A.E. has a 43.7 per cent illiteracy rate for females in the 15-24 age group.

More specifically, cluster one is characterized by the following:

- 90 PER CENT OR HIGHER FEMALE GROSS ENROLMENT RATIOS AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL;
- GIRLS' PERSISTENCE RATES BETWEEN 84 PER CENT AND 96 PER CENT AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL;
- DIFFERENCES OF 10 PER CENT OR LESS IN THE PERCENTAGES OF GIRLS AND BOYS WHO ATTEND PRIMARY SCHOOL;
- FEMALE SECONDARY LEVEL ENROLMENT RATES LOWER THAN PRIMARY ENROLMENT RATES, PARTICULARLY IN RURAL TURKEY AND OMAN;
- VARIABLE INSTRUCTIONAL QUALITY AND RELEVANCE AT THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVELS; AND
- HIGH ADULT LITERACY RATES FOR WOMEN AGES 15 TO 19 BUT LOWER LITERACY RATES FOR OLDER WOMEN.

Based on these characteristics, cluster one country educational goals might include the following:

- IMPROVE GIRLS' PERSISTENCE AT THE BASIC LEVEL, PARTICULARLY IN RURAL OMAN AND JORDAN;
- INTENSIFY EFFORTS TO IMPROVE GIRLS' PARTICIPATION AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL, PARTICULARLY IN RURAL AREAS;
- IMPROVE INSTRUCTIONAL QUALITY AND RELEVANCE AT THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVELS; AND
- IMPROVE ADULT LITERACY FOR WOMEN OVER 25.

CLUSTER TWO COUNTRIES

OVERVIEW

Cluster two, which includes Tunisia, Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, and Libya, is diverse in relation to population, geographic location, political disposition, and culture. Although this cluster includes most of MENA's middle-level income countries, it also includes Egypt, which has a GNP of $630. It should be noted that most of the nations of cluster four, the war-torn category (Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, and the Occupied Territories), would most likely be included in cluster two were it not for the prolonged strife that each has experienced.

With the exception of Saudi Arabia and Libya, all of the cluster two countries have large (46-55%) rural populations. Two cluster two countries—Egypt and Algeria—are expansive, with large, relatively isolated regions. Some also have substantial nomadic populations. In predominantly rural areas, school expenses, the girls' contribution to the household economy, difficulties in reaching the schools, and the quality and relevance of the rural schools combine to discourage parents from sending their girls to school.

EDUCATIONAL STATUS

When primary education is examined, cluster two countries show a relatively wider spread for each statistic than do cluster one countries. Some countries in this group are doing quite well in one area, while others need substantial improvement in that same area. For example, Tunisia's primary gross enrolment rate is 113 per cent whereas, despite its largely urban composition, the primary gross enrolment rate in Saudi Arabia is only 71 per cent. The same general observation can be noted for girls' persistence. The differences in the ratios of boys and girls who attend primary school in cluster two are larger than the differences in the boys' and girls' enrolment ratios in cluster one, and these differences are relatively consistent. Otherwise, what cluster two countries share is mixed achievement, particularly at the primary level.

Despite considerable improvement in the 1980s, girls' secondary enrollments in cluster two countries are generally quite low and merit improvement. The case of Tunisia is particularly startling; there, girls' gross enrolment ratios drop from 105 per cent at the primary level to 38 per cent at the secondary level. Tunisia employs a noticeably low percentage of female teachers at the secondary level; women make up less than one-third of the teaching force. This and other factors may affect girls' enrolment in Tunisia and in other cluster two countries.

In nearly all cluster two countries, more than half of the women ages 15 and older are illiterate. Compared to cluster one, a higher percentage of girls ages 15-19 cannot read or write.

In summary, cluster two countries are characterized as follows:

- VARYING ENROLMENT AND PERSISTENCE RATES FOR GIRLS AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL;
- PRIMARY LEVEL GENDER GAPS BETWEEN 10 AND 20 PER CENT, WITH LARGER GAPS IN RURAL AREAS;
- FEMALE ENROLMENT AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL BETWEEN 35 AND 55 PER CENT; AND
- ADULT FEMALE LITERACY AVERAGING 50 PER CENT, WITH HIGH PERCENTAGES OF GIRLS AGES 15-19 AS WELL AS OLDER WOMEN WHO CANNOT READ OR WRITE.

Based on these educational characteristics, cluster two country educational goals might include the following:

- IMPROVE GIRLS' PRIMARY LEVEL ENROLMENT, PARTICULARLY IN SAUDI ARABIA AND RURAL EGYPT AND ALGERIA;
- EMPHASIZE PRIMARY EDUCATION FOR GIRLS IN RURAL AREAS TO REDUCE THE GENDER GAP;
- PROMOTE GIRLS' EDUCATION THROUGH THE SOCIAL, CULTURAL, RELIGIOUS, AND POLITICAL ARENAS;
- IMPROVE GIRLS' SECONDARY ENROLMENT RATES, PARTICULARLY IN TUNISIA; AND
- INCREASE FEMALE ADULT LITERACY FOR TEENAGE AND OVER 25 POPULATIONS.

CLUSTER THREE COUNTRIES

OVERVIEW

The third cluster, comprised of Morocco, Sudan, the Republic of Yemen, and Djibouti, includes MENA's poorest countries when GNP is used as an indicator. These nations also have largely rural populations: approximately half of the Moroccan people and between 70 to 80 per cent of the Sudanese and Yemeni populations live in rural areas.

EDUCATIONAL STATUS

Due to financial and geographical constraints, the provision of primary education in cluster three is seriously inadequate. Although girls' participation is lower than that for boys, neither boys nor girls in these countries achieve basic education in large numbers. In Sudan, for example, the male gross enrolment ratio was a mere 57 per cent while the female ratio was 40 per cent. What appears to be a high primary level gross enrolment figure in the Yemen Arab Republic for both boys and girls (92 per cent) is actually the result of an extremely high male gross enrolment ratio (140 per cent); this implies that an inordinate number of boys are either overage or are repeaters in an inefficient, overburdened system. This over-enrolment of boys more than likely contributes to the low 42 per cent girls' enrolment ratio in the same country and results in a 98 per cent gender gap. Girls' persistence is extremely low in all cluster three countries as well. Again, in the former Yemen Arab Republic, of the 42 per cent of the girls who enrolled, only 22 per cent completed the six-year cycle. Clearly for this group, fundamental change directed at girls is of paramount importance at the primary level.

In addition to the fiscal constraints, two other factors may partially explain the relatively weak condition of girls' primary education level in cluster three countries. First, primary-level teaching staffs are predominantly male; women make up only an average of 30 per cent of the instructors in this sub-group. Second, these nations' per pupil expenditures on higher education far exceed spending on basic education. For example, the ratios of expenditures on higher education to expenditures for basic education in Sudan and the former People's Democratic Republic of Yemen are 25 per cent and 30 per cent respectively. In contrast, the ratio for cluster one countries, Turkey and Bahrain, is as low as 8 per cent. Clearly, primary education could well benefit by a transfer of resources from higher education in cluster three countries.

As girls' participation at the primary level is so poor, secondary enrollments are predictably very low; these range from 7 per cent in the former Yemen Arab Republic to 30 per cent in Morocco. Finally, the vast majority of the women in cluster three cannot read or write. It is not simply older women who are illiterate; in Sudan for example, over 63 per cent of teenage girls cannot read or write. More specifically, cluster three countries are characterized by the following:

- AVERAGE PRIMARY ENROLMENT RATES FOR GIRLS AT 40 PER CENT, THE LOWEST IN THE REGION;
- GIRLS' PRIMARY PERSISTENCE RATES BETWEEN 20 PER CENT AND 60 PER CENT;
- LARGE GAPS BETWEEN THE PERCENTAGES OF BOYS AND GIRLS WHO ATTEND PRIMARY SCHOOL;
- EXTREMELY LOW FEMALE ENROLMENT AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL (7-30 PER CENT); AND
- FEMALE ILLITERACY RATES BETWEEN 61 PER CENT AND 88 PER CENT, WITH TEENAGE GIRLS AS WELL AS OLDER WOMEN WHO CANNOT READ OR WRITE.

Based on these educational characteristics, cluster three country educational goals might include:

- IMPROVE PRIMARY LEVEL EDUCATION FOR BOYS AND GIRLS;
- CLOSE THE GAP BETWEEN BOYS AND GIRLS' ENROLMENT AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL;
- PROMOTE GIRLS' EDUCATION THROUGH SOCIAL, CULTURAL, RELIGIOUS, AND POLITICAL ARENAS;
- REALLOCATE EDUCATIONAL EXPENDITURES TO PLACE MORE EMPHASIS ON PRIMARY EDUCATION;
- IMPROVE GIRLS' ENROLMENT AND PERSISTENCE AT THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVELS; AND
- IMPROVE ADULT LITERACY FOR TEENAGE AND ADULT WOMEN.

CLUSTER FOUR: WAR-TORN COUNTRIES

OVERVIEW

The countries of cluster four have a shared experience of armed conflict, but more importantly, the armed conflicts and political upheavals of these countries have had a serious impact on their educational systems. Given the temporary nature of war, the countries in this cluster could justifiably have been absorbed into other categories. But because of the impact and the implications of war on their educational systems and the significance of the armed conflicts factor in determining the nature of the developments and the changes within those educational systems, a special cluster was created for those countries. It is also important to note, however, that all of the clusters are in no way meant to be fixed groupings. Countries might have to be classified differently as situations and educational indicators change.

At this point in time cluster four includes Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, and the Occupied Territories (West Bank and Gaza). Each of the war-torn countries has endured over a decade of significant episodes of war or other forms of civil strife. Over 21 million children in these areas have been adversely affected by such circumstances.[32] As a result, these nations confront substantial additional challenges in providing education, literacy, and vocational skills for their children in general and possibly for their girls in particular.

Two other countries—Kuwait and Sudan—could have been included in this cluster. Kuwait was included in cluster one, however, because despite the recent war, its educational statistics still compare with those of other cluster one countries. Sudan was included in cluster three because its educational status is believed to be mainly the result of socio-economic factors rather than of the armed conflict and the civil war.

Although the war-torn countries have undergone similar, tragic experiences, each merits separate discussion. The nature of the violent conflict that has occurred differs from case to case. For example, whereas Lebanon has experienced both prolonged war and occupation, Iran fought an extended war with a single foe. In addition, the extent of the damage done to civilian areas varies from country to country: the Iran-Iraq war was fought in a limited geographical area along their shared border; by contrast, coalition attacks on Iraq during the recent Gulf War caused widespread destruction to the infrastructure in many regions of the country. Finally, the respective educational performances of the four war-torn countries vary tremendously, as the following will indicate.

EDUCATIONAL STATUS

IRAN. Despite a lengthy war with Iraq, Iran improved its primary education statistics significantly during the 1980s. Iran is the only war-torn country to have accomplished this. To a large extent, this achievement can be attributed to the importance that the Revolutionary Government attached to education as a means of "Islamicizing" the Iranian population.[33] Girls' primary enrolment rose from 72 per cent in 1980 to 109 per cent in 1988. Female secondary enrolment in 1988, however, was only 44 per cent. Adult female literacy is a significant problem as well, as only 36 per cent of Iranian women could read and write in 1986. This is largely a rural problem, however, as the urban female literacy rate is 65 per cent.[34]

IRAQ. Education in Iraq has not fared nearly as well as it has in neighboring Iran. As would be expected in war-torn countries, Iraqi education statistics have fallen dramatically, with boys' enrolment dropping by 10 per cent between 1980 and 1988 and girls' primary enrolment falling even more drastically, from 95 per cent to 78 per cent during that same time period. At the secondary level, the picture is different: male enrolment fell substantially, from 75 per cent to 58 per cent during the 1980s; at the same time, female enrolment fell just 1 per cent from 38 per cent to 37 per cent. Finally, approximately 50 per cent of Iraqi women cannot read or write and are in need of literacy and other skills training.

LEBANON. Prior to the civil war, Lebanon was MENA's most exemplary nation in terms of educational access and gender equity in education. By 1960, girls' primary enrolment had reached an impressive 99 per cent.[35] Lebanon was the only country in MENA that was able to achieve this high rate of girls' primary enrolment so early in the push for universal primary education. As a result of the early success in providing primary education, the female adult illiteracy rate in 1990 was 27 per cent, the lowest in the region.

The fighting, however, has taken its toll on the population's mental and social welfare as

well as on the education of children in Lebanon. Lebanese children as well as Palestinian children residing in refugee shelters in Lebanon have been exposed to a variety of traumas.

A Lebanese child has, on average, experienced five or six traumatic events, which have included nutritional deprivation, change of residence, and exposure to combat and shelling.[36] Displaced Lebanese and Palestinians can be found living in shelters, abandoned buildings, camps, and former school buildings. In addition, inadequate water supply and waste disposal predispose residents to a variety of hygiene-related illnesses.[37] The damage to the educational programme is difficult to gauge, as accurate, current data are scarce and often contradictory. The only consistent and noncontradictory factor in the data received from Lebanon is that the gender gap at the primary level continues to be nonexistent despite the prolonged years of war. UNICEF reports that enrollments for boys and girls together have dropped since the outbreak of the war and estimates that between 20 and 30 per cent of Lebanese children (boys and girls) do not attend primary school.[38]

WEST BANK AND GAZA. Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza value education as an essential resource for their children. During the past three decades, females' access to this resource has improved considerably.[39] Still, educational efforts in the Occupied Territories have been hindered by political conditions. No centralized public education system is in place: schools are operated by Israeli authorities, the UNRWA, private sector groups, and charitable and nongovernmental organizations. These have been subject to frequent and prolonged closures.[40] For this reason, clandestine schools are also run by individuals who teach children in their own homes.[41] Many children and teenagers participate in Intifada activities, taking time away from the pursuit of education.

As is the case with Lebanon, accurate education statistics for the Occupied Territories are difficult to access. UNRWA reports that, in 1986, the total gross enrolment ratio at the primary level was 67.2 per cent in the West Bank and 87.6 per cent in Gaza, with no appreciable gender gaps.[42] Girls are less likely, however, to attend secondary school in war-ravaged areas due to the scarcity of secondary schools in rural areas, the distance girls must travel to reach them, the opportunity cost of their labor, and generally conservative attitudes regarding women's social roles.[43] In addition, 36.7 per cent of females exhibit a fear of leaving their homes.[44] The illiteracy rate for women ages 15 and older is 50 per cent in the West Bank and 30 per cent in Gaza. More women than men are illiterate in the Occupied Territories, and most of those women who cannot read or write live in rural areas.[45]

In summary, education in cluster four has been characterized by the following:

- DIFFICULT AND DANGEROUS LIVING AND TRAVELING CONDITIONS;
- SHIFTED NATIONAL PRIORITIES, RESULTING IN LIMITED FOCUS OF FINANCIAL OR PERSONNEL RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS;
- WEAKENED NATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURES AS WELL AS REDUCED TEACHER MORALE AND PERFORMANCE THAT HINDER PROGRESS IN EDUCATION;
- DISRUPTED SCHEDULES AND PROGRAMMES;
- CHILDREN ATTENDING SCHOOL WITH BASIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITIONAL NEEDS UNFULFILLED;
- DECLINING GIRLS' ENROLLMENTS AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL IN MOST COUNTRIES;
- LOW ENROLMENT RATIOS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL IN SOME COUNTRIES;
- CHILDREN WHO ARE OFTEN TRAUMATIZED BY WAR AND THE LOSS OF LOVED ONES, AND WHO ACCEPT CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE AS AN ACCEPTED PART OF EVERYDAY EXISTENCE; AND
- ADULTS, PARTICULARLY IN RURAL AREAS, WHO ARE ILLITERATE.

Based on these educational characteristics, cluster four countries educational goals might include the following:

- REALLOCATE RESOURCES FROM MILITARY SPENDING TO EDUCATION AND TRAINING;
- INCREASE HEALTH AND NUTRITION SERVICES TO CHILDREN IN WAR-TORN AREAS;
- MAKE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS SAFER AND MORE APPEALING TO PARENTS OF BASIC AND SECONDARY LEVEL CHILDREN;
- INTEGRATE COOPERATIVE LEARNING, DIVERSITY, AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN SCHOOL CURRICULA AT THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVELS;
- PROVIDE LITERACY TRAINING FOR WOMEN IN RURAL AREAS; AND
- CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY SYSTEMS TO PROVIDE LITERACY AND HEALTH TRAINING.

Figure 14 summarizes the different areas of educational needs for the different countries within the four clusters.

Figure 14
MENA Educational Needs, by Cluster

Individual Areas of Needs	Analyze Government Expenditures on Education	Shift GNP Expenditures from Military to Education	Increase Girls' Primary Enrolment	Increase Girls' Primary Persistence	Lower the Primary Level Gender Gap	Increase Girls' Secondary Enrolment	Reduce Female Adult Illiteracy	Repair Educational Infrastructure	Render Teaching/Learning Process More Future Oriented	Address Children's Psychological Needs
CLUSTER ONE										
Qatar									●	
Turkey					●	●			●	
Bahrain									●	
U.A.E.							●		●	
Oman					●	●	●		●	
Jordan						●			●	
Kuwait	●	●						●	●	●
CLUSTER TWO										
Tunisia				●	●	●	●		●	
Syria					●	●	●		●	
Egypt	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	
Saudi Arabia	●	●	●		●	●	●		●	
Algeria			●		●	●	●		●	
Libya				●		●	●		●	
CLUSTER THREE										
Morocco	●		●	●	●	●	●		●	
Sudan		●	●	●	●	●	●		●	
Yemen	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	
Djibouti			●	●		●	●		●	●
WAR-TORN COUNTRIES										
Iran					●	●	●	●	●	●
Iraq			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Lebanon							●	●	●	●
West Bank & Gaza			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

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IV

Strategies That Work

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OVERVIEW

THIS CHAPTER PRESENTS TWENTY STRATEGIES THAT MENA countries can implement to improve girls' participation in education and improve adult female literacy. Because of the three target groups for this study, these strategies include actions that address primary, secondary, and out-of-school adult education. These strategies also take into consideration the economic, cultural, social, and educational conditions in the different clusters of MENA at the present time.

Integrated throughout the strategies are several recurring themes:

- THE IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING DEMAND FOR EDUCATION TO ACCOMPANY SUFFICIENT SUPPLY;
- THE IMPORTANCE OF PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN IMPROVING CHILDREN'S EDUCATION;
- THE NEED FOR A PLANNED INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY INTO THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM; AND
- THE IMPORTANCE OF MOTHER'S EDUCATION IN IMPROVING GIRLS' PARTICIPATION.

The strategies are organized into six categories: strategies that create a political climate and a supportive environment responsive to priorities needed to improve girls' education; strategies that enhance the physical environment; strategies to improve the teaching/learning process; strategies that lead schools toward the future strategies that support education through the third channel; and strategies to improve female adult literacy. The 20 strategies are grouped as follows:

CREATING POLITICAL CLIMATE AND A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

1 Build Political Will to Reallocate Budgets
2 Promote Intra-regional Networking
3 Mobilize Partners
4 Promote Localization and Decentralization
5 Reduce the Opportunity Costs to Girls' Families

ENHANCING THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

6 Build Primary Schools Closer to Communities (includes multi-level classroom curriculum/instruction)
7 Build Latrines Wherever Schools Lack Them
8 Provide Sex-segregated Schools in Appropriate Regions
9 Make Schools More Attractive, Stimulating, and Accommodating Places

IMPROVING THE TEACHING/LEARNING PROCESS

10 Improve Teacher Quality
11 Make Teachers Agents of Change
12 Develop/Adapt Curricula and Teacher Training That Are More Gender Sensitive
13 Ensure the Provision of Textbooks and Appropriate Instructional Materials
14 Hire More Female Teachers at the Secondary Level

Rendering the Teaching/Learning Process More Future-Oriented

15 Promote Cooperation, Understanding, and Tolerance

16 Conduct Innovative and Diversity-Appreciation Extra-curricular Activities

Supporting Education Through Innovative Channels of Communication

17 Utilize Educational Technology to Support Classroom Instruction

18 Instill Basic Skills in Out-of-school Girls

Enhancing Female Adult Literacy

19 Integrate Parent/Child Education to Improve Female Adult Literacy

20 Utilize a Diversity of Channels to Promote Female Adult Literacy

For each strategy included in this chapter, a rationale for its inclusion is followed by several practical interventions to facilitate implementation.

This list is not exhaustive. Other strategies not included here may also bring positive results. Selected strategies, however, do meet the effectiveness, appropriateness, sustainability, replicability, affordability, and participatory process criteria specified in Chapter I. Inclusion was also based on a review of a variety of documents addressing basic education in developing countries and on the author's technical expertise gained through years of regional travel and consultation. Finally, strategies were selected based on practicality. All strategies were selected for their ability to be easily translated into tangible action.

If the 20 strategies presented here are implemented, desired outcomes are likely to result. It is also important to note that while each strategy has its own merits, combining several strategies can increase the chances that gains and improvements will be significant and sustained.

BUILD POLITICAL WILL TO REALLOCATE BUDGETS

RATIONALE

In order for a national plan to be effective, certain basic underpinnings must be in place. First, the country must demonstrate a commitment to education for all at a national level by including education, particularly girls' education, as a top priority in the political agenda and supporting that commitment with the necessary resources to make it happen. Qatar, Bahrain, U.A.E., Oman, Jordan, and Kuwait all set literacy and basic education as priorities and achieved at least 95 per cent gross primary enrolment by 1988.

While several of these countries are high-income countries, money is not the only contributing factor to the desired educational gains. For example, Turkey's GNP of $1,360 in U.S. dollars is significantly lower than the GNPs of oil-rich Qatar, U.A.E., and Kuwait, yet their total gross enrolment ratios (GERs) are comparable. Despite relatively limited resources, Ataturk, Turkey's leader in the 1920s, led the country to impressive improvements in national literacy by discarding an elitist system where schools were open only to a chosen few and replacing it with an open public school system supported by teacher training and a series of mass literacy campaigns. Literacy rates exceeded 85 per cent by 1988. Similar results were realized in Jordan and Oman. Political will, together with effective allocation and utilization of available resources, can bring about significant results.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Convince Leadership

Like Ataturk, many MENA leaders may have demonstrated a commitment to equality and the universal right to basic education. Others may need to be convinced that improving girls' education is important for economic, social, and developmental as well as humanistic reasons. Participation in highly visible meetings, group presentations, and international conferences can become the conduit for convincing reluctant leaders to include girls' education as a part of their platform. Discussions should emphasize the following points:

- HIGH RATES OF PRIMARY ENROLMENT GENERALLY CORRELATE WITH HIGH GNP PER CAPITA.
- EDUCATED WOMEN GENERALLY MARRY LATER AND ARE LIKELY TO HAVE SMALLER FAMILIES.
- EDUCATED WOMEN GENERALLY HAVE LOWER RATES OF INFANT AND CHILD MORTALITY AND HEALTHIER FAMILIES.
- EDUCATED WOMEN ARE MORE LIKELY TO PARTICIPATE IN AND SUSTAIN HEALTH AND NUTRITION PROJECTS, WATER AND SANITATION ACTIVITIES, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTAL EFFORTS.

Documentation for these benefits and particularly statistics supporting the findings should be provided, and the media needs to be encouraged to broadcast the benefits. It is always easier for leaders to support a cause that the media backs and already champions.

Adopt/Revise Compulsory Education Laws

Two countries with respectively very low and low primary enrolment rates—Sudan and Saudi Arabia—have no laws requiring children to attend school. While compulsory education laws are not prerequisites for success (Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman for example, have reached universal primary education without compulsory education), having laws on the books is a clear message to those reluctant to send their girls to school that literacy is important and will be a national priority. In addition, laws provide parents and communities grounds for advocacy and provide a role in public policy debates. Those countries with compulsory education laws should review whether and how existing laws are enforced and make modifications to make them more responsive to current priorities.

Reallocate Budgets

Allocations for educational programs should be reviewed at the national and departmental levels. National budgets are a tangible indication of the level of commitment to a particular area. Available MENA statistics show that countries with successful educational programs generally spend from about 7-15 per cent of their government expenditure and from 2-7 per cent of their GNP on education. In addition, the developing and industrial countries in general spend about 5.5 per cent of their GNP on military. MENA countries that allocate significantly larger portions of national budgets towards military efforts divert monies that could be used in improving educational performance at primary, secondary, or tertiary levels.

At the agency level, national education budgets should reflect educational priorities. For example, budget allocations should reflect the student enrolment pyramid, with the largest numbers of students enrolled at the base or primary level of education and progressively smaller numbers of students enrolled at the secondary and tertiary levels. This is based on the premise that larger numbers of primary students will supply sufficient numbers of secondary and tertiary level students to complete the educational cycles. Unfortunately, certain MENA country education budgets (e.g., Sudan and Yemen) support an inverse relationship, with more money allocated for tertiary education than primary. Budgets should also reflect consideration of the current supply-and demand-side issues. Allocations should include funds for construction, staffing, and materials as well as teacher training parent involvement, and educational mobilization.

Each MENA country should review its national budgets to identify the following:

- PERCENTAGE OF THE GNP ALLOCATED TO EDUCATION AS OPPOSED TO MILITARY EFFORTS;
- PROPORTION OF EDUCATIONAL MONIES ALLOCATED TO PRIMARY, SECONDARY, TERTIARY, AND ADULT EDUCATION IN RELATION TO NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING NEEDS;
- ALLOCATIONS OF MONIES TO TEACHER INCENTIVES, STUDENT MATERIALS, EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY, AND LITERACY PROMOTION AS OPPOSED TO BUILDING CONSTRUCTION; AND
- ALLOCATION OF FUNDS TOWARDS GIRLS' EDUCATION.

If, after budget reallocations, financial resources are still needed, planners have two options: identify other sources of funding and/or make more efficient use of what is available.

- ALL CLUSTER TWO COUNTRIES FOR THE BENEFITS OF SECONDARY LEVEL EDUCATION; AND
- ALL CLUSTER THREE COUNTRIES FOR THE BENEFITS OF PRIMARY LEVEL EDUCATION.

2

PROMOTE INTRA-REGIONAL NETWORKING

RATIONALE

Given the shared commitment to EFA, the regional similarities in language and culture, and the various stages of educational progress throughout the region, it appears that MENA could benefit from a major intra-regional networking initiative. As with networking in general, the purpose of any educational networking activities would be to exchange experiences, identify individual and organizational expertise, and provide mutual support. This type of exchange might be particularly helpful in MENA because of the region's economic diversity. Some countries have successfully improved girls' primary education by allocating significant financial resources to the effort. Others have developed successful programs with more limited resources. Strong networking among the 21 countries would enhance the building and sharing of a regional body of knowledge, expertise, and resources that could bring about improvements not just in individual countries but in the region as a whole.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Promote Stronger, Action-oriented Educational Linkages

Conferences, workshops, seminars, and other types of fora for exchange of educational experience need to be organized by governments, donors, and regional institutions. These fora should focus on action-oriented deliberations that are based on research and practical experience. Participants, i.e., policy makers, practitioners, and researchers, should represent key educational institutions from both the public and private sectors. These fora should contribute to the improvement of the climate that supports basic education in general and girls' and women's education in the region in particular. The fora would also result in activating and supporting a network of education specialists in the region that could be tapped for a variety of educational technical assistance needs. As a result of these educational linkages, this network of education specialists and/or a coalition of education institutions could help expand the vision of girls' education by promoting cooperation and collaboration, collecting and disseminating information, and connecting diverse groups.

Promote Greater Educational Exchange Between Oil-rich Countries and Other MENA Countries

Historically, Egypt, Sudan, and Jordan have supplied a large number of teachers to the MENA oil-producing countries. Evidence shows that in many of these countries these teachers have been the backbone of those educational systems and that their presence helped boost the educational advances in those countries. The brain drain of teachers, however, from Egypt and Sudan in particular might have had an adverse impact on the educational development within those two countries. To create more balanced mechanisms and a dual commitment, other exchange avenues could be explored. An example would be a "school twinning" project, where teachers from oil-rich countries could be matched with teachers from least developed MENA countries. Students could establish penpals and exchange information about their countries. Teachers from oil-rich countries could "adopt" a class and generate funds for the class from parents, communities, and local authorities. Of course, other non-monetary support could be solicited as well. This type of exchange mechanism will strengthen the feelings of solidarity in the MENA region and will enhance the intra-regional linkages.

MOST APPROPRIATE CLUSTERS AND/OR COUNTRIES FOR THIS STRATEGY

- ALL MENA COUNTRIES

3

MOBILIZE PARTNERS

RATIONALE

Basic education is not the sole responsibility of the ministries of education. Basic education is the responsibility of both the public and private sectors, governments and parents, national and local authorities, and others. Reaching the UPE goals requires new and revitalized partnerships at all levels: partnerships between ministries of education and other ministries; partnerships among all subsectors of education; partnerships between governmental and nongovernmental agencies; and partnerships between the private sector, the media, religious groups, women's organizations, local organizations, teachers' associations, and parents' associations. These partnerships can serve to heighten the awareness for greater involvement in basic education and continually remind the region of its need for and commitment to girls' education.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Develop Partnerships That Support Girls' Education

By itself, the ministry of education cannot create an environment, a context that heightens the intrinsic need to educate all children and ensure that all girls access schools and complete their basic education. Government and the diverse organizations of the private sector, the media, and the business sector all together need to institute the appropriate environment, incentives, and support that will encourage wider demand for educating girls and women. Each MENA country needs to identify a lead agency that will take the initiative in identifying and mobilizing the partners and creating a Coalition for Education for All. The Coalition should bring together the several actual or potential partners involved in meeting basic learning needs: e.g., family and community organizations, voluntary associations, religious bodies, teachers' unions, employers, the media, political parties, women's organizations, co-operatives, universities, and other institutions as well as education authorities and other government departments and services. Once the Coalition is created, the cooperative process can begin. Through the partners, the Coalition will organize activities that will result in social, economic, and educational policies that are supportive of girls' education.

Mobilize Through the Partnerships Greater Resources for Girls' Education

To respond to the unmet needs of enrolling and retaining all children, and specifically girls, in basic education, new resources will have to be sought. These new resources can be mobilized through:

- A BROADER GOVERNMENTAL BASE OF SUPPORT;
- AN INCREASED FINANCIAL EFFORT AND COMMITMENT DEMONSTRATED BY MORE ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT AND EXPANDED PARTICIPATION OF NON GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES, WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS, COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, PARENTS, AND INDIVIDUALS; AND
- ASSISTANCE FROM EXTERNAL FUNDING AGENCIES.

In most countries these different organizations already play some part in financing basic education. Greater involvement and a greater commitment by all possible partners will result in more financial resources for girls' education.

Launch Public Campaigns

While commitment from the national and organizational leadership is important, ultimately it is the public that must send its children, particularly its girls, to school. Public information campaigns can be used to convince the parents of the importance of girls' education and of its benefits to the individual, the family, and the society. As with campaigns undertaken in many countries to promote breastfeeding or oral rehydration, like the United States' smoking cessation or seat belt usage campaigns, organized and targeted public campaigns can provide information (i.e., explain the law and/or the benefits) in order to influence attitudes and behavior.

Because the goal is to provide education to the majority of the region's population, campaigns should be broad-based and designed to appeal to a variety of audiences. With the various literacy levels and widespread acceptance and availability of television and radio throughout the region, campaigns can utilize innovative approaches with print and nonprint media to promote girls' education. More specifically, campaigns should do the following:

- CONVEY THE IMPORTANCE OF GIRLS' EDUCATION TO CITIZENS IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS;
- INFORM THE PUBLIC OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION LAWS AND REQUIREMENTS;
- MOTIVATE PARENTS AND COMMUNITIES TO BECOME MORE ACTIVE IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AT HOME, AT SCHOOL, AND IN THE PLANNING OFFICE; AND
- ENCOURAGE COMMUNITIES AND PARENTS TO ORGANIZE AND ADVOCATE FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN EDUCATION.

In MENA, these educational public campaigns might be more effective if they highlight the support of the Moslem religion to basic education. Campaigns need to clarify to the public the expectations that Islam has with regard to the responsibilities of Moslems to educate themselves. Quotations from the Koran and the Hadith such as, "Education is the responsibility of each Moslem man and each Moslem woman," and "Read! and thy Lord is most generous, who teaches by the pen teaches people what they know not," need to be used in the campaigns through the different media such as television, radio, newspapers, and other media. The campaigns need to capitalize on the supportive environment of the Moslem religion regarding education and need to continuously underline the religious and educational connections. Saudi Arabia's literacy promotion initiative, for example, built on Islamic doctrines to enhance education. Al-Hariri, a researcher who studied Islam's perspective on women's education, states that the Saudi educational system gives a central role to Islamic doctrines, which support the concept of the family as the key social unit and stress the vital importance of family links. As a result, educational progress consolidates family life.[46] She also states that Saudi Arabia considers both sexes equal in their search for education because the Prophet said: "Every Moslem, male and female, is requested to seek knowledge."

Public campaigns, or social and educational mobilization campaigns, have greater chances of success when they are tailored to country-specific needs, have clear objectives and messages, and they target well-defined audiences. Some campaigns need to focus on primary education, but others may not; some may need to focus on retention or completion; some may need to increase demand by strengthening parent support; some may need to target supply issues by emphasizing the vital importance of having schools closer to communities; and some may focus on to increasing girls' access and retention in schools.

Among cluster one countries, Turkey and Jordan have implemented effective campaigns that, among other factors, impacted on access to and persistence in their respective educational systems. In the cluster two countries, public campaigns are needed to emphasize the benefits of secondary education. Public campaigns in Yemen, Sudan, and Morocco are needed to highlight the benefits of primary education in general and of girls' primary education in particular.

MOST APPROPRIATE CLUSTERS AND/OR COUNTRIES FOR THIS STRATEGY

- ALL MENA COUNTRIES

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

4

PROMOTE LOCALIZATION AND DECENTRALIZATION

RATIONALE

Localization - the involvement of local communities in a particular process - and decentralization - the distribution of powers from a central authority to regional and local authorities - have been promoted as strategies for improving school management and thus enrolment and retention.

There are good theoretical reasons to carefully localize functions in the educational system. Planned and implemented in an appropriate way, localization becomes an essential element in successful educational interventions. Localization means greater participation by the local community and parents in the planning and management of the local education system. Greater participation and involvement translates into better knowledge of the educational system, closer linkages with the school, and better understanding of the nature of the teaching/learning process. Localization might also translate into improved advocacy and participation in decisions affecting schooling and education. These factors lead to greater support to schools, and when parents and communities increase their support to schools, they also increase the participation of their children in schools. There is a positive correlation between increased community and parent participation and a higher percentage of enrolment and retention of children in school.

Decentralization, the second half of this strategy, involves the dispersal of power, services, and responsibilities from the central level to the regional and local levels. Decentralization encompasses localization but also involves regional and local school administrators in planning, implementing, and evaluating educational programs and services. Implemented effectively, decentralization does the following:

- BUILDS MORALE AND CONFIDENCE AND RESULTS IN RESPONSIBLE ACTIONS BY THOSE WHO BECOME MORE CLOSELY INVOLVED IN THE SYSTEM;
- CONTRIBUTES TO IMPROVED CREDIBILITY AND RELEVANCE OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM;
- CONTRIBUTES TO A BETTER SENSE OF COMMON PURPOSE THAT IS RESPONSIVE TO REAL PRACTICAL NEEDS;
- LESSENS THE DISTANCE (NOT ONLY PHYSICAL THIS TIME, BUT ALSO PSYCHOLOGICAL) BETWEEN PARENTS AND SCHOOLS; AND
- PROMOTES THE GRADUAL SHIFT OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR RESULTS TO THOSE WHO ARE GETTING MORE AND MORE INVOLVED WITH THE DECISIONS RELATING TO THE SCHOOL.[47]

If implemented inappropriately or incorrectly, decentralization can result in expanded bureaucracy, confusion in terms of accountability and responsibility, and varying quality. The appropriate and gradual decentralization of management functions toward local communities (with the government at the national and provincial levels playing a supportive, supervisory, and facilitative role, mobilizing public resources, and setting overall guidelines and priorities), however, is considered an essential strategy for increasing access to and retention in primary schools.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Develop a Plan of Action to Link People and Education Closer Together at an Appropriate Pace

Most ministries of education in MENA need to implement a realistic and pragmatic transition from what appears to be heavily centralized systems to systems that bring people and education closer together. The decentralized system for primary education should be allowed to gradually evolve. Two of the major considerations for any system of decentralization are leadership and capacity of the entity (e.g., the district, the school) to assume whatever responsibilities are to be decentralized.

Ministries of education need to:

- CONDUCT CAPACITY ASSESSMENTS AT THE CENTRAL, REGIONAL, DISTRICT, AND LOCAL LEVELS;

- ACQUIRE BOTH THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HOW TO IMPLEMENT DECENTRALIZATION;
- PROVIDE LEADERSHIP, GUIDANCE, AND TRAINING TO REGIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL PERSONNEL;
- DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE DECENTRALIZATION OF BASIC EDUCATION.

This plan should include clear, concise policies for both educational decentralization in general and also financial, managerial, and operational decentralization in particular. Systems to sustain these new policies should be planned and implemented. Staff positions should be filled by qualified people. Where qualified personnel are not available, ministries can provide pre-service workshops and in-service training to build staff capability. Building space and equipment may be donated by interested individuals or organizations. Materials to introduce the concepts of decentralization should be distributed and discussed.

The comprehensive decentralization plan should take into consideration the following issues:

- COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT;
- HUMAN RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRAINTS;
- ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARDS;
- RESPONSIBILITIES SPECIFIED AND PLACED AT EACH LEVEL;
- RESPONSIBILITIES SHARED BETWEEN LEVELS;
- TRAINING NEEDS AT VARIOUS LEVELS; AND
- CAPACITY BUILDING AT VARIOUS LEVELS.

Improve Coordination and/or Transfer Responsibilities Among the Various Levels

As a result of the plan of action and the needed training, the following activities will need to be implemented:

- TRANSFER SCHOOL MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS FROM THE STATE/PROVINCIAL LEVEL TO THE DISTRICT AND LOCAL LEVELS THROUGH LOCAL MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS SUCH AS EDUCATION COMMITTEES;
- PROVIDE APPROPRIATE TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO PLAN AND MANAGE LOCAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS;
- IDENTIFY AND FORMULATE INDICATORS TO MONITOR PROGRESS AT THE LOCAL LEVELS; AND
- ESTABLISH GREATER LINKS AMONG THE THREE TIERS OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION - CENTRAL, REGIONAL, AND LOCAL - TO REDUCE THE ISOLATION OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION AND INCREASE THE IMPORTANCE OF ITS ROLE.

Increase Involvement of NGOs

The potential role of NGOs is significant. In each one of the MENA countries there are large numbers of NGOs that are involved in improving the quality of life of their communities. Often the energies of the NGOs are not well focused or well channeled. If the energies and activities are well organized and targeted to achieve specific gains in education, their role can become vital. As James Grant said in a Conference of UNICEF- affiliated NGOs in 1992: "NGOs can play the most vital role in eliminating gender disparity because they can raise awareness on this issue at the political and social level, and they can implement some of the programmes in the most cost-effective manner."[48]

Because of their grassroots experiences and their decentralized, independent voices, NGOs are well placed to take advantage of initial moves towards decentralization and in some countries (even though a small number of MENA countries) the growing shift of power from central governments to the people. Their role as intermediaries between the community and the regional and central administrations is key and can be utilized in a most productive way.

Most Appropriate Clusters and/or Countries for This Strategy

- Large countries in cluster one such as Turkey and Oman;
- All countries in cluster two, specifically Egypt, Algeria, Libya, and Saudi Arabia;
- All cluster three countries; and
- All cluster four countries.

3

Reduce the Opportunity Costs to Girls' Families

RATIONALE

In developing countries, parents often give poverty as a primary reason for girls' poor enrolment, attendance, and completion rates. School attendance is technically free in many MENA countries, in Yemen, Djibouti, Sudan, and the rural regions of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Egypt, but the indirect costs of uniforms, tutoring, and books are expenses that parents often cannot afford or do not wish to pay. In addition, girls often assist with household chores and care for younger siblings while their parents work. If girls attend school, parents with younger children are often forced to pay for child care or lose valuable work time. Faced with these options, parents often choose to keep the girls at home. Reducing the opportunity costs for girls' families would make it more attractive for parents to send their girls to school and could improve girls' retention and completion rates.

The challenge in reducing family opportunity costs is in identifying interventions that are effective and sustainable over the long term. Although scholarships are often considered a solution to the opportunity cost issue, they cover the private costs of education but do not make up for lost child care or work time. Scholarships are also expensive to maintain. Innovative solutions are needed.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Provide Flexibility in Daily and Year-round Schedules

Non-formal schools in Bangladesh and Central America have been successful in increasing girls' enrolment and retention rates in rural areas by providing non-traditional class schedules. Classes are shorter than those offered in formal traditional schools to allow girls to help with chores and child care. Schools adjust to agricultural labor demands and close during times when girls are needed in the fields. In some programmes, basic education is provided for girls older than those traditionally enrolled at the primary level, with the curriculum presented in fewer years. Parents are involved at the planning and decision-making stage to ensure that the modified schedule meets their needs. Modified schedules could be integrated into "non-traditional" formal schools or in non-formal educational programmes.

Involve Non-Governmental Organizations

Often NGOs can provide services in a more flexible way than formal school systems. NGOs generally do not have the bureaucracies, unions, and other elements that constrain formal systems. NGO educational programmes could be used as a stopgap measure until the formal system can expand enough to reach the unserved population.

Contacting NGOs that are already involved in development in a particular country may be a first step in identifying NGOs to assist with non-formal education. International donors might also be approached.

Provide Community Child Care Centers and Kindergartens

Because a major contributing factor to girls not attending school in cluster two and three countries is the need for their labor and time to tend to younger siblings, governments, NGOs, and/or communities can provide child care centers and kindergartens to liberate older girls from chores that prevent them from going to school. Child care centers and kindergartens can be attached to regular primary schools or to women's literacy centers; this will facilitate the transportation of the children to the centers or kindergartens and will not require an additional trip by either the mothers or the older sisters to ensure that the children have access to those centers.

MOST PRIORITY COUNTRIES FOR THIS STRATEGY

- MOST OF CLUSTER TWO COUNTRIES;
- ALL CLUSTER THREE COUNTRIES; AND
- IRAN AND IRAQ FROM CLUSTER FOUR.

6

BUILD PRIMARY SCHOOLS CLOSER TO COMMUNITIES

RATIONALE

Since the 1960s, developing countries have focused on increasing the numbers of schools, thereby offering more places for girls as well as boys. While this supply-side approach resulted in initial significant increases in girls' enrolment, enrolment plateaus and higher dropout rates suggest that attracting those girls hardest to reach and keeping girls in school will require more than simply building more schools.

Evidence from two MENA countries supports this conclusion. In Tunisia, for example, where educational expansion was a major priority in the late 1950s, the annual growth rates in girls' primary education peaked at 14 per cent in 1960 but dropped to 4 per cent by 1980.[49] The dropout rate was also higher for girls than for boys, with girls dropping out earlier as well. One study[50] found the girls' dropout rate to be 19.4 per cent in the last year of primary school. Recent statistics show that in Tunisia's rural areas, girls still drop out at much higher rates than boys.[51] In Egypt, a rural construction program resulted in 100 per cent enrolment for boys but only 74 per cent for girls, even though spaces were still available.[52] Like Tunisia, enrolment in Egypt increased significantly during the first year but dropped progressively in following years.[53] Despite a national law making schooling mandatory up to age 15 and strict rules to prevent school dropout, girls in Egypt at the primary level dropped out at higher rates than boys.[54]

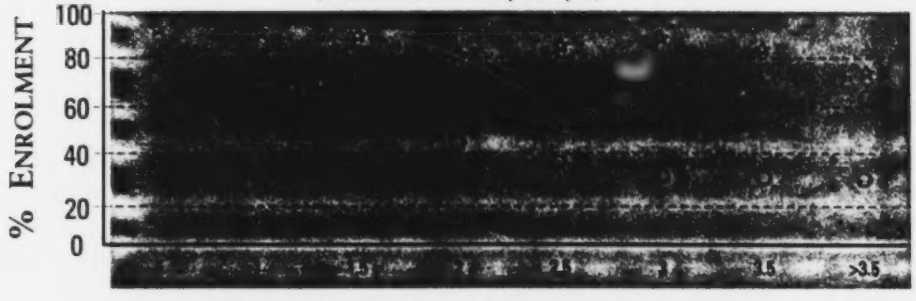
For the Egypt study, the authors concluded that "additional school construction in the original sites, other than to keep pace with population increases will do little to affect the enrolment of the remaining female children out of school." They also found, however, that locating schools closer to children's homes increased enrolment. For example, when schools were located within one kilometer of the children's homes, schools had a 94 per cent enrolment for males and 72 per cent enrolment for females, but girls' enrolment dropped to about 40 per cent when schools were 2 kilometers away and to about 30 per cent when schools were 3 or more kilometers away (see Figure 15). A recent study on the dropout of Tunisian girls from primary school in rural areas also found that the school's distance from home is a major factor in the dropout rate, not only because of the distance to be walked but also because the schools are located "in areas outside of the family's control" where girls may be exposed to "wild animals and men."[55] If the girl cannot be accompanied to school by parents or a friend, they are withdrawn from school.[56] Although centralized boarding schools for girls are often a solution to the distance problem for the region's elite, they do not meet the needs of the masses.

Given the evidence that the building of schools closer to communities is likely to increase female enrolment and retention, decision-makers are faced with the challenge of balancing the funding of school construction and placement with the funding of teachers and materials

Figure 15

Grade One Enrolment by Distance from School in Egypt

(Intensive Community Sample)



Source:
Robinson, Makary, and Rugh

to help ensure that quality instruction is provided at the locally placed schools. Interventions are needed to ensure that newly constructed schools are strategically located so as to both maximize access and persistence and also provide quality instruction.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Build Primary Schools Closer to Communities in Need

Countries that have experienced plateaus or have not achieved desired enrollments for girls at the primary level can use school mapping and geographic information systems to pinpoint pockets of illiteracy and determine optimal positioning for schools. Planners can review school locations in the areas where enrollments are lowest, assess their distance from the homes and communities, and make decisions about where new schools should be built. (Given the findings of Robinson, Makary, and Rugh highlighted in Figure 14, primary schools in rural areas of the Arab world should be no more than one kilometer away from parents' homes.) Planners can then build new schools where they are most needed. Planners need to ensure that the size of the catchment area per school is not too large.

Building more schools in the rural communities may require some tradeoffs. Size may need to be sacrificed for quantity. With nearly the same budget allocated for building new schools, ministries of education can construct in a given region ten smaller community schools instead of five large schools. Where ministry funds are not available, community volunteers can join together and build or create school space. This has worked successfully in Nepal, for example, through the Cheli Beti project.

However, it is important to recognize that some research points to the fact that larger schools are more cost-effective than smaller schools, because larger schools can better afford important educational resources such as libraries, laboratories, sports equipment, specialized staff, specialized individual student services, etc.[57] Even though larger schools can command better resources and facilities, most of these (except for libraries) are more needed and utilized at the secondary level. Hence, while large schools may be more cost-effective and beneficial at the secondary level, small strategically-located schools provide greater access, particularly for girls, at the primary level.

Provide Multi-grade Instruction

To contain costs, building smaller schools closer to communities may require some combining of instruction so that all of the targeted children in a community can still be served. Multi-grade instruction, combining techniques from the traditional one-room schoolhouse approach and the more innovative, individualized instructional approach, can be effective.

In rural Colombia for example, where young girls often missed or dropped out of school due to domestic responsibilities and where limited resources prohibited the traditional one teacher/one classroom design, the Escuela Nueva Program has provided cost-effective, localized education. In Escuela Nueva, semi-programmed materials arranged in sequential learning units, together with resources corners, a 100-book library, and student assistant leaders, allow girls to work individually and in small groups when they are not receiving direct instruction from the teacher. Launched in 1976, the program had been expanded to 15,000 schools in 1989. Evidence shows that Escuela Nueva has improved student achievement, enhanced self-esteem, and reduced dropout and repeater rates.[58]

Effective implementation of this type of programme requires the following:

- SCHOOLS EASILY ACCESSIBLE TO RURAL COMMUNITIES;
- SUFFICIENT SPACE FOR GROUPS TO WORK INDEPENDENTLY;
- CAREFULLY DESIGNED, AGE AND DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE WRITTEN MATERIALS FOR EACH GRADE LEVEL;
- EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY (SUCH AS AUDIO-CASSETTES, TELEVISION, INTERACTIVE RADIO, AND LEARNING AIDS) APPROPRIATE FOR USE BY SMALL GROUPS TO SUPPORT DIRECT INSTRUCTION;
- TRAINING TO PREPARE TEACHERS TO PROVIDE MULTI-LEVEL INSTRUCTION; AND
- SUPPORT STAFF TO ASSIST THE TEACHER IN PLANNING AND MONITORING THE INDEPENDENT LEARNING ACTIVITIES.

- ALL CLUSTER TWO COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY EGYPT, TUNISIA, AND ALGERIA; AND
- ALL CLUSTER THREE COUNTRIES.

7

Build Latrines Wherever Schools Lack Them

RATIONALE

In many of MENA's poorer and more rural areas, schools lack toilet facilities. For example, studies have shown that a large number of Yemeni schools, especially those in rural communities, are without latrines.[59] As cultural norms in MENA prevent girls and women from relieving themselves in public, the absence of toilet facilities is a substantial barrier to girls' enrolment and persistence in school. The lack of latrines in rural Syrian schools has been found to be a significant factor in families keeping their girls from school—despite severe legal penalties for preventing children from attending primary school.[60] The absence of toilet facilities also reduces the likelihood that women will accept teaching jobs. Access to latrines is critically necessary for the physical comfort of girls and female teachers. Installing facilities specifically for girls will likely lessen the gender gap and increase girls' enrolment and persistence rates.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Reallocate Education Funds for This Purpose

In very poor countries, scarce financial resources are a formidable constraint to providing every school with bathroom facilities. It is therefore suggested that education planners examine national expenditures at all levels of education. Throughout MENA, spending per pupil is sometimes significantly higher at the tertiary level than it is for basic education. Ironically, tertiary spending per pupil far exceeds that on primary-age pupils in those countries where basic education is in greatest need of improvement. In 1988, for example, Sudan and the former People's Democratic Republic of Yemen spent 25 and 29 times as much per university student as they did per primary level student, respectively. Where this is the case, education officials should transfer a small percentage of their tertiary budgets to the primary sector in order to respond to several needs within the primary sector, including building needed toilet facilities.

Encourage the Involvement of NGOs and Communities in Building Latrines

Although parents and communities often want to be involved in improving the educational programme, their participation may be limited for several reasons: they have not identified a vehicle for channeling their support; they consider education outside their realm, particularly if they are illiterate or poorly educated; and/or they cannot afford to offer unlimited time and resources. Building latrines can be one way to allow parents and communities to support the schools in a very defined, concrete way. Non-governmental organizations that are working closely with specific communities have the skills and the experience in mobilizing them for collective action and may be able to organize the population in order to build latrines for those schools that need them. NGOs often are more effective than governments in implementing projects that require innovative approaches and methodologies and in coordinating activities that need full cooperation from local leadership. In addition, NGOs often can implement some programmes more cost-effectively. Given these characteristics, NGOs would be among the most appropriate organizations to become involved in the latrine-building campaigns. Building latrines could also be a practical, hands-on activity for increasing parent and community involvement and commitment to schools and improving girls' access and persistence.

MOST APPROPRIATE CLUSTERS AND/OR COUNTRIES FOR THIS STRATEGY

- CERTAIN CLUSTER TWO COUNTRIES, SUCH AS RURAL SYRIA AND EGYPT; AND
- CLUSTER THREE COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY YEMEN.

8

Provide Sex-segregated Schools in Appropriate Regions

RATIONALE

There are two main reasons for advocating sex-segregated schools where appropriate: one is cultural and relevant to certain regions of MENA; the other is educational and not necessarily region-specific.

Due to cultural norms and traditions, in many MENA countries as well as in rural areas regionwide, it is believed that a woman should be kept separate from men who are not family members. All public schools in Iran and Saudi Arabia are sex-segregated. In Sudan, whereas coeducation is accepted practice at the primary level, the majority of children attend single-sex schools; coeducation is officially discouraged at the intermediate level.[61] One study pointed to the lack of female-only schools as a major constraint to girls' education in the Republic of Yemen.[62] In these and other countries, when a girl is visibly entering puberty, parents may withdraw her from primary school and/or refuse to send her to secondary school. This behavior may be reflected in secondary enrolment figures that are consistently lower than primary enrolment ratios for females MENA-wide. The supply of educational facilities must respect popular cultural values regarding female behavior, role, safety, and security if girls are expected to attend and stay in school, especially during their teenage years.

The educational rationale goes beyond the cultural values and considers the relative benefit for male and female students in both coeducational and single-sex schools. According to a World Bank study, the relative effectiveness of single-sex education versus coeducation on student attitudinal and cognitive outcomes has become a question of considerable interest and analysis. Whereas coeducation is seen as improving educational efficiency and promoting positive social development for students,[63] recent studies suggest that single-sex education has strong positive effects on student achievement and self-perceptions, particularly for girls. For example, a 1989 study on enhancing girls' learning through single-sex education analyzed the relative importance of single-sex education and coeducation in Thailand in enhancing eighth-grade male and female student scores on standardized mathematics tests, holding student background and school characteristics constant. Researchers concluded that "single-sex schooling is more effective for female students, and coeducational schooling is more effective for male students in improving student performance in mathematics."[64]

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Build Single-sex Schools

Schools must respond to cultural expectations. Many MENA countries such as the UAE, Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia already responded to those cultural expectations and boosted enrolment and persistence, specifically at the primary level. Other MENA countries would help improve girls' primary persistence and secondary enrolment rates by constructing girls' schools and staffing them with women teachers in those regions, particularly rural areas, where parents are concerned about their daughters' safety and interaction with males. The supply of such institutions would ease parental anxiety over their daughters' well-being and increase girls' participation in primary and specifically post-primary education. In addition, given the findings of the recent studies on the quality of girls' performance in single-sex schools, the supply of such institutions should not deter governments from investing in them.

Make Existing Schools More Sensitive to Community Attitudes About Gender Segregation

In those countries that lack funds for new construction, innovative ways of accommodating gender considerations in existing institutions should be pursued. Secondary schools might offer two shifts: one for girls and another for boys. The girls' shift could be operated during the morning and early afternoon so that girls would not be forced to walk home after dark. The boys' shift would then span the afternoon and early evening. This is a less costly method of improving older girls' access to education and reducing the large gender gaps that characterize conservative areas. Other alternatives include sex-segregated classes on floors within a particular school.

• All cluster two countries, particularly Algeria, rural Tunisia, and rural Egypt at the secondary level; and
• All cluster three countries.

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9

Make Schools More Attractive, Stimulating, and Accommodating Places

RATIONALE

Schools in rural areas, war-torn countries, or otherwise disadvantaged locales are too often physically oppressive: classrooms are dark, dull, and dingy. Teachers are imposing, authoritarian figures. Going to school can feel like a chore or punishment to children. Such characteristics are strong disincentives to students and contribute to low persistence rates. Schools that provide bright, attractive, dynamic, and stimulating environments will be more successful in retaining students and keeping them interested and attentive. Schools that emphasize creativity, self reliance, and problem-solving will develop children's critical thinking. Finally, schools that allow the students to develop their own materials will enhance self-directed learning.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Involve Students in Improving School Environments

One way to improve grim school environments would be to allow students to paint their schools' interior and exterior walls. Because labor for such a project is provided by the teacher and the students, paint and brushes are the only costly inputs. With the teacher as project leader, students work together to improve their school's appearance. More attractive surroundings would no doubt increase teacher and student morale. This kind of undertaking would yield other positive outcomes as well. Improved teacher-student relationships would result from the interaction and cooperation involved in the painting process. Also, giving students the opportunity to make a tangible contribution to their learning environment will help them develop pride as well as a sense of ownership in their schools, which could contribute to higher persistence rates.

Encourage Use of Innovative Learning Materials

One of the signs of a good classroom is the variety of materials that have been gathered and used by students. In addition to the regular materials (blackboards, chalk, etc.) that are provided by the school, students and teachers, with the help of the community, should be able to collect and develop useful learning materials. In its *Manual for Teachers and Supervisors for the Community School Project*, UNICEF Egypt lists the following as examples of what could be gathered as learning materials:

- CONTAINERS, SUCH AS WOVEN BASKETS, OR OPEN CLAY POTS, TO STORE MATERIALS;
- BEANS, SEEDS, AND GRAINS (FOR COUNTING AND GAMES);
- SMALL PLANTS, LEAVES, SMALL ROCKS, AND SOILS (THESE COULD BE DISPLAYED IN CONTAINERS WITH LABELS); AND
- DIFFERENT SIZE CUPS, PLASTIC GLASSES, EGG CARTONS, SPOONS, AND TOOTHBRUSHES (FOR ART WORK, DESIGN, AND COUNTING).

During the scholastic year, students should plant and take care of plants. This can be done indoors in containers or outdoors in small, protected gardens.

Encourage Students to Design and Display Posters

Another method of involving students in upgrading their learning environment is to incorporate into the curriculum projects in which they create and display original posters. Again, this would require few inputs: paper, colorful markers or crayons, and hanging implements. Children could be encouraged to design posters around topics that relate to their personal lives, their communities, and to curriculum topics such as health and the environment. Such an activity would stimulate their minds: youths would learn from each other through viewing and asking questions about others' works. The activity could be repeated, and poster displays be changed at regular intervals, in order to continue to challenge and interest students. In addition, working together to hang their posters on school walls could foster camaraderie and cooperation among students. Displaying their work would also give students a sense of accomplishment, improving their self-esteem.

- Schools of remote areas and of shanty towns in cluster two countries;
- All cluster three countries; and
- All cluster four countries.

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IMPROVING THE TEACHING/LEARNING PROCESS

10

IMPROVE TEACHER QUALITY

RATIONALE

Well-trained, well-motivated teachers and principals are essential to any effective school system.[65] Yet in MENA, particularly in its rural regions, teachers are in short supply, and those who are employed are often undertrained. As mentioned earlier, women are particularly under-represented.

Several conditions contribute to the quality of the instruction and the shortage of female teachers:

- LACK OF SUFFICIENT NUMBERS OF QUALIFIED CANDIDATES, PARTICULARLY WOMEN, INTERESTED IN TEACHING;
- LOW TEACHER MORALE STEMMING FROM LOW WAGES, ERRATIC PAY, FEW INCENTIVES, AND LOW RESPECT FOR THE POSITION;
- LIMITED ACCESS TO TEACHER TRAINING IN RURAL AREAS; AND
- LACK OF THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO ENABLE CHILDREN TO THINK INITIALLY, VALUE TOLERANCE AND COOPERATIVE BEHAVIOR, IN PREPARATION FOR A PEACEFUL INTERDEPENDENT AND DEMOCRATIC FUTURE.

Improving the quality of instruction must involve increasing the numbers of candidates joining the profession and improving the skills and morale of those teachers already in the labor force.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Increase the Applicant Pool

In rural areas, bringing the training closer to the communities often results in more people, particularly women, participating in teaching training programmes. In Yemen, for example, a mobile teacher training institute was used successfully to train rural area primary school graduates to become primary school teachers. Recruiting, training, and hiring local teachers not only increases the applicant pool but also often results in a greater retention rate for teachers in remote rural areas (see Strategies 4 and 14 for more discussion).

Provide Compensation and Incentives That Build Morale

Salaries are often identified as a major factor in attracting qualified candidates and retaining them in the work force. Higher salaries, which bring more respect to the teaching profession and help teachers live comfortably without working at several other jobs, often result in significant boosts in applicant pools, teacher performance, and teacher retention. In cluster one countries and Saudi Arabia and Libya from cluster two, monies are available for increasing salaries.

Salary may not be the only deterrent, however. In Uganda, for example, in addition to low salaries, the lack of salary scales and untimely payment contributed to poor teacher performance and morale.[66] Untimely and erratic payment also contributed to poor teacher performance and low morale in South Africa.[67] MENA countries experiencing severe teacher morale problems should review the teacher payment process to ensure consistent, timely payment. Other financial incentives might include bonuses for outstanding performance or pay differentials for certain difficult-to-fill positions, such as remote rural teaching positions.

In addition to salary adjustments, school systems might consider offering teachers any of the following incentives:

- JOB TENURE;
- RECOGNITION BY PRINCIPALS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND NATIONAL LEADERS FOR QUALITY PERFORMANCE;
- MORE INVOLVEMENT AND INPUT IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT, DECISION-MAKING, AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT;
- A MORE SECURE WORK ENVIRONMENT;
- MORE FUNCTIONAL/APPEALING/PROFESSIONAL WORK ENVIRONMENTS (E.G., FACILITIES WITH LATRINES, DESKS, AND TEACHER WORK AREAS; PLANNING PERIODS; AND/OR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT);
- ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION PROGRAMMES WHERE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE THE

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN A PARTICULAR SUBJECT AREA CAN TEACH UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS; AND

- FRINGE BENEFITS, SUCH AS LOW-INTEREST MORTGAGES, FREE OR SUBSIDIZED HOUSING, AND CHILD CARE.

Incentives should be selected based on existing circumstances and local teacher prefeences.

Improve Access to Teacher Training in Rural Areas

Quality teacher training is another factor in the creation of quality teachers.[68] The German school system, for example, identified by Kantrowitz et al (1991) as one of the ten best in the world because of its teacher training programme, combines mastery of two subject areas, instruction in educational theory and techniques, and extensive in-class observations/demonstrations with experienced teachers in its teacher training. Using the following innovative strategies, MENA countries can integrate many of these activities into their teacher training programs.

- *Build Teacher Knowledge and Skills Using Educational Technology.* In rural Sri Lanka, in-service distance education proved to be the most cost effective (over pre-service and traditional in-service teacher training programmes) in improving teacher performance and teacher knowledge.[69] In isolated areas, radio, audiocasettes, and videocassettes all can be used to introduce content and theory, impart new information, and/or provide model lessons to individuals and small groups more flexibly and less expensively than traveling to centralized training institutes.
- *Make Teacher Training More Practical.* Hands-on experiences and the transfer of practical skills rather than formal lectures have been tested and proven effective in developing world settings. In Haiti, where many teachers lacked basic competencies in both academic subject content and instructional techniques, teachers reviewed content, constructed teaching materials and learning aids, and developed lesson plans during hands-on teaching workshops. Teachers were more comfortable in this group environment, and the group activities were highly motivational.
- *Continuously Modernize and Update Teachers' Skills.* Intensive, short-term training is needed to continuously update and modernize teachers' technical skills. Gaining computer literacy and technology know-how improves teachers' image and allows them to be in touch with the progress in the age of information as well as the state-of-the art in various scientific fields. Ministries of education need to organize short-term workshops where these new kinds of training can be delivered. Budgets of ministries of education need to be reanalyzed in order to be able to allocate funds for such training. An option would be to carefully analyze the budgets allocated for pre-service training and redirect resources whenever excesses exist. Often ministries of education will not have to design such training but rather can take advantage of already existing workshops and register a selected number of teachers in the workshops. For those ministries that can afford to train its full corps of teachers, such training can become a part of the in-service training programmes. Providing teachers with such new skills will modernize the teaching corps, improve its skills, and enhance its morale. In addition, it will help instill in MENA's youth the skills needed for the work force of the 21st century.
- *Use Experienced Teachers to Provide In-service Training.* In-service education using experienced, existing staff members has been used very successfully in rural areas of the United States. In North Carolina, for example, lead teachers are given time off from their regular classroom activities to observe new teachers and assist them in planning lessons and activities. This programme has resulted in higher achievement, higher attendance, and higher performance on state achievement tests for the students. The programme also resulted in increased parent and teacher involvement. A modified version of this has been implemented with the Basic and Non-formal Education System (BANFES) in Lesotho, where teachers were often unqualified, discouraged, and/or lacked support due to isolation. Master teachers were selected to serve as District Resource Teachers who in turn went out to help teachers in remote areas. Master teachers visited schools about four times a year, staying for several days during each visit. Under BANFES, student pass rates tripled, with an investment of about $20 per pupil per year.[70]

• ALL MENA COUNTRIES.

11

Make Teachers Agents of Change

RATIONALE

The future of most of the MENA countries is heavily dependent on the future generation and what it achieves through the educational systems. This future generation is the product of many factors, not the least of which is what the educational system is inputting into their minds. Teachers are primary "inputters" into the minds of youth. In most MENA countries teachers are considered ultimate sources of information and key imparters of knowledge. In addition, they are viewed as role models, especially for girls. What teachers say and do is important and impacts in a vital way on the present and future behavior of their students.

Countries in the region can build on that important role and shape a major part of the behavior of future generations by producing teachers that value critical thinking and problem solving, respect diversity and tolerance, and are gender sensitive. Co-existence in the region can only be achieved if certain basic principles and values such as equity, peaceful resolution of conflict, democratic approaches, and continuous dialoguing as a strategy for reaching solutions are respected. Even though it cannot be the sole driving mechanism for achieving these prerequisites, education does play a vital role in directing the youth to channel their energies in ways that will help attain these goals.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Redesign the Content of Teacher Training to Include Critical Thinking and Other Vital Subjects

Teachers can be agents of change, and their perception of themselves needs to reflect this concept. To better prepare teachers for this role, both pre-service and in-service teacher training needs to teach skills that allow teachers to present themselves as conduits to the future rather than only imparters of information gathered from the past and the present. Training should prepare teachers to serve as facilitators who assist students in understanding that the future holds many options, which are based on a set of principles, attitudes, and behaviors that encompass a strong belief in positive approaches. Teacher training should also equip teachers to build in their students life-long positive attitudes about:

- CRITICAL THINKING AND PROBLEM-SOLVING;
- COMMITMENT TO FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS;
- FACTS FOR HEALTHY LIVING;
- GENDER SENSITIVITY (SEE STRATEGY 12 FOR MORE DETAILS); AND
- A BELIEF IN THE CAPACITY AND POTENTIAL OF EACH INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY.

Make Teacher Training More Participatory

To become the expected effective change agents, teachers need to be trained not only in the contents of a reformed curriculum but also in how to interact with students in a way that models the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors described above. Teacher training itself and teaching methods cannot continue to be based on the passive learning modes favored in the 1950s and 1960s. Rather, both pre-service and in-service teacher training need to:

- UTILIZE LEARNER-CENTERED PARTICIPATORY AND INTERACTIVE APPROACHES;
- ENCOURAGE INQUIRY AND QUESTIONS;
- MODEL LESS AUTHORITARIAN APPROACHES;
- ENCOURAGE GENDER-SENSITIVE APPROACHES IN TEACHING;
- PROMOTE DIALOGUE FOR REACHING CONSENSUS OR SOLUTIONS;
- PROMOTE DEMOCRATIC BEHAVIOR; AND
- ENCOURAGE EQUAL ASPIRATIONS FOR BOTH GIRLS AND BOYS.

Female teachers need to be trained to serve as role models for the girls that are enrolled. Particularly in rural areas, a female teacher may be the only employed woman that boys or girls encounter. Female teachers should be taught specific strategies and approaches for introducing opportunities to and providing experiences for female students.

Female teachers who acknowledge and appreciate the cultural traditions and beliefs but who are not simply blind imitators of past practices are needed. There is a need for women

who are both sensitive to the culture of their country and community and also aware of the challenges facing the region in the future. Teacher training should empower teachers with a new set of capabilities so that they can impart the skills, beliefs, and knowledge that will assist students in building that common future.

Emphasize Interaction and Relevance in the Classroom

What takes place in the classroom and how it takes place are elements of crucial importance to the teaching/learning process. Traditionally, the formal primary school curriculum has covered the basic subjects of reading, writing, and arithmetic. While these subjects are important for all students, they are not the only basic skills that are needed. Rural parents would be more likely to send their children to school if school prepared them to deal with the problems of their daily lives in a more effective way and if school taught them to be more productive. In rural areas, school curricula may need to be adapted/expanded to incorporate basic life skills without eliminating the basic literacy and numeracy that all primary school students should have.

In addition to the content, the interaction between the teacher and learner is a determining factor in how much is learned and how well it is learned. In most MENA countries, the education systems are to a large degree teacher-centered and/or textbook-centered. Information flows from the top to the bottom. The assumptions are that teachers know it all and learners should receive it all. There is need for a more balanced approach—an approach that values all human elements in the classroom, i.e., the teacher and the learner. The educational systems need to become more student-centered, and the teaching methods need to build on interactive and cooperative learning, where students learn not only from the teachers and textbooks but also from each other. By learning from each other, students learn to take greater responsibility for their own learning. Greater and more equitable interaction in the classroom also motivates learners. This interactive approach can bring about greater participation from the students when the teacher does the following:

- PROMOTES COOPERATIVE LEARNING THROUGH GROUP PROJECTS;
- ENCOURAGES THE SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY BY ASSIGNING PRESENTATION TASKS TO THE LEARNERS;
- CREATES A FREE ENVIRONMENT BY DEVOTING TIME EACH WEEK TO QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS;
- PROMOTES RESPECT FOR EVERY POINT OF VIEW BY FACILITATING A CONTINUOUS FLOW OF INFORMATION AMONG THE STUDENTS AND BY ENCOURAGING STUDENTS TO LEARN FROM EACH OTHER; AND
- VALUES A TEACHING/LEARNING PROCESS THAT INCORPORATES A DEMOCRATIC APPROACH.

Research has shown that "any attempt to improve student achievement must be based on the development of effective teaching behavior." Also, research has shown that the classroom experience is a focal point of immense significance in the socialization of the child. Therefore the approaches used in the classroom will lay the foundations for patterns of behavior in the future.

Expand Teacher Roles Beyond the Classroom

The role of teachers in MENA schools has been a very traditional one, with teachers instructing groups of students in classroom settings during specified periods each day. This role, however, differs from that of the rural health worker whose professional activities generally extend beyond the basic health clinic into the surrounding community. If educational systems are to bring about the changes in attitude and behavior needed to improve girls' participation, teachers in low attendance areas may need to adopt the health worker approach and spend more time in the community interacting with parents. By explaining the programme, answering questions, and encouraging participation, teachers can increase parents' acceptance of girls' education and help bring about change.

MOST APPROPRIATE CLUSTERS AND/OR COUNTRIES FOR THIS STRATEGY

- ALL MENA COUNTRIES

12

Develop/Adapt Curricula and Teacher Training That Are More Gender Sensitive

RATIONALE

Although research on the impact of curricula changes on learning outcomes and/or achievement is inconclusive, there is no question that curriculum and learning are linked. It is generally recognized in the different studies that gender-based stereotypes in the textbooks and in teaching practices influence students' educational achievements. Textbook and instructional content contribute to pupil socialization. They are sources of information on social norms and projections of future roles. Textbooks present models of people, describe behavior, and emphasize thought patterns. By communicating that some people are better, more valuable, or more active than others, specifically as they relate to gender, textbooks are certain to have an intellectual influence. They present a common culture and a set of values that students, particularly basic education students, accept without questioning.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Develop Gender-sensitive Curricula

Gender-sensitive curricula that incorporate goals such as "fostering respect for each other" would introduce both boys and girls to changes in attitudes and relationships by presenting them in positive interactions rather than depicting girls in limiting images and boys in more expansive roles."[1]

A gender analysis of the curriculum should summarize how the messages about the role of girls and women in society are conveyed to girls and boys. The analysis should explore social stereotyping of personality traits of men and women, their aptitudes, family roles, and contributions as well as social roles and participation in society. After the analysis, a gender-sensitive curriculum needs to be developed whereby the words and the images of the textbooks and the instructional materials are free of gender bias and are positively all-embracing.

Developing and/or reforming a curriculum might involve the following steps:

- INCREASE FEMALE ROLE MODELS IN THE TEXTBOOKS;
- PORTRAY ACTIVE AND PROACTIVE WOMEN IN A WIDE VARIETY OF OCCUPATIONS, PARTICULARLY MODERN SETTINGS;
- PORTRAY WOMEN WORKING IN SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL FIELDS, WELL-REMUNERATED JOBS, AND IMPORTANT ROLES IN THE AGRICULTURAL FIELD; AND
- DEPICT MORE FREQUENTLY MEN IN FAMILY-RELATED, CHILDREN-RELATED ACTIVITIES.

Design Gender-sensitive Teacher Training

Teacher training programmes need to include sessions that help teachers improve their teaching skills through gender-based awareness raising and effective teaching/learning strategies that focus on the following:

- GENDER-BASED TEACHER EXPECTATIONS;
- TEACHER/STUDENT INTERACTION BASED ON GENDER;
- TEACHING STYLES AND TECHNIQUES;
- CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION STRATEGIES, I.E., GENDER-BASED SEATING ARRANGEMENTS AND CLASS SCHEDULING;
- REINFORCEMENT OF A POSITIVE ATTITUDE IN ALL PUPILS, BOYS AND GIRLS, TOWARDS MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE; AND
- DEVELOPMENT IN ALL PUPILS, GIRLS AND BOYS, OF A DESIRE FOR CONTINUED PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH.

Teachers' guides need to reflect the new gender-sensitive approach in training and would need to have specific instructions to encourage the inclusion of girls in the classroom interactions when subjects such as mathematics, science, agriculture, and technology are being taught.

MOST APPROPRIATE CLUSTERS AND/OR COUNTRIES FOR THIS STRATEGY

- ALL MENA COUNTRIES.

13

Ensure the Provision of Textbooks and Appropriate Instructional Materials

RATIONALE

Perhaps more than any other technology, the availability of textbooks can improve student achievement."[72] Textbooks both organize the instruction and present it to the student. They are often the main source of information, particularly when the teacher is inadequately trained.

Providing more textbooks involves supply-side and demand-side issues. First, in order for textbooks to be effective, they must be more widely distributed to students. In the Philippines, for example, student learning improved on an average by one third when the student-to-book ratio was reduced from 10:1 to 2:1.[73] Like many supply-side solutions, however, increasing the quantities of textbooks is a necessary but insufficient condition. To be most effective, textbooks also must be well designed, with content that is relevant, appropriate for the intended audience, and gender sensitive.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Assess Current Status of Textbooks

Each MENA country should review the textbook situation to determine the following:

- THE STUDENT-TO-TEXTBOOK RATIO FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVEL STUDENTS;
- THE PERCENTAGE OF MONIES ALLOCATED TO TEXTBOOKS AS IT RELATES TO MONIES ALLOCATED FOR OTHER EDUCATIONAL EXPENDITURES;
- ANY DISPARITIES IN TEXTBOOK ALLOCATIONS, BY URBAN AND RURAL REGIONS; AND
- THE CONTENT INCLUDED IN THE MATERIALS (TO INCLUDE SEQUENCE OF INSTRUCTION, LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY, CULTURAL APPROPRIATENESS, AND TREATMENT OF GENDER ISSUES).

Budgets may be revised or priorities shifted based on this initial assessment.

Provide More Textbooks and Appropriate Instructional Materials

Depending on the available resources, countries can develop and/or purchase sufficient textbooks and other printed materials. If commercial texts are used, they should be carefully reviewed, with training provided to guide teachers in making the content more relevant, culturally appropriate, and gender neutral.

Low-cost desktop publishing also provides promise for those who are preparing texts, workbooks, and other written materials at the local level. Using relatively inexpensive hardware and user-friendly software, local programmes can produce near print-quality materials for a fraction of the cost.

Provide Libraries

Libraries offer yet another alternative to provide limited numbers of printed materials to a wider audience. Inclusions could be selected specifically to reinforce instructional content and improve achievement. Mobile libraries, much like the bookmobiles used in rural areas of the United States, can provide further access to children who are hardest to reach.

Provide Teachers with Sufficient Instructional Materials and Teachers' Guides

Often curricula are developed and/or reformed and textbooks are produced, printed, and distributed based on the new curriculum without adequate instructional materials and guides for the teachers. Teachers cannot be expected to effectively teach a curriculum if they do not receive guidance on how to present it to the students. Instructional materials and teachers' guides should be provided to help teachers fully understand the objective, scope, and sequence of the different lessons and assist them in organizing the teaching/learning, activities in a manner that is more student-centered and that results in the stimulation of students' natural curiosity and desire to learn.

MOST APPROPRIATE CLUSTERS AND/OR COUNTRIES FOR THIS STRATEGY

- ALL MENA COUNTRIES.

14

Hire More Female Teachers at the Secondary Level

RATIONALE

As a girl in MENA reaches puberty, the protection of her security and honor becomes a paramount concern, particularly for conservative families in rural areas. Traditional values hold that women should interact primarily with other women. For this reason, parents may be reluctant to keep a maturing female child in school if she has a male teacher. The presence of a female teacher in the classroom would reduce parents' anxiety and encourage them to keep their daughters in secondary school. Female teachers also serve as positive role models for young women and may increase the likelihood that they will complete secondary school.

Statistics from the region show some correlation between the proportion of female teachers and female enrolment at the secondary level. Between the primary and secondary levels of education in every MENA state, there is a decline both in the percentage of women teachers and in girls' enrolment ratios. Those countries where women constitute a relatively large portion of the teaching staff have the highest female enrolment statistics. Qatar, whose secondary-level teaching staff is 57 per cent female, has MENA's best female secondary gross enrolment ratio (85 per cent). The obverse also is true: in the former Yemen Arab Republic, where only 9 per cent of the teachers are female, the female gross enrolment ratio was a MENA-low 7 per cent.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Recruit Female Teachers from Vicinity of Secondary School

In many MENA regions, it is not acceptable for women to commute long distances by themselves to work; in addition, they are not permitted to rent rooms in faraway towns. Female teachers must live within easy reach of the schools they teach in. Efforts to hire women from the immediate vicinity of secondary schools would counter the cultural and logistical obstacles that female teachers face. Female instructors chosen from the community are also more likely to be trusted by local parents of secondary school-aged girls.

Establish Decentralized Teacher Training Centers for Women

Locally-recruited women will require teacher training. Too often, however, teacher training institutes are located in distant urban centers. Again, transportation and lodging are problematic issues for women. Also, trainees often become acclimated to the glamour and relative comforts of a city and are reluctant to return to remote rural areas to teach. Establishing regional teacher training centers in rural areas where women can be appropriately housed would give women access to the training they need and increase the likelihood that they will return to their communities as teachers.

Where regional teacher training institutes are not feasible or appropriate, there are other ways to decentralize teacher training. For example, to be able to increase the number of women teachers, Yemen, with the assistance of UNICEF, started primary teacher training in existing secondary institutions in rural areas. The programme targeted girls who had completed grade six. Transportation to and from class and a monthly payment were provided. Following the two-year training period, the programme moved on to other areas. The dropout rate during the programme was less than 1.5 per cent, despite the fact that several of the girls married during the training. What is being done in Yemen is a step in the right direction, but must be expanded significantly if a national increase in both the number of women teachers and the participation of women at a more localized level, is to be achieved.

MOST APPROPRIATE CLUSTERS AND/OR COUNTRIES FOR THIS STRATEGY

- ALL CLUSTER TWO COUNTRIES AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL, PARTICULARLY TUNISIA; AND
- ALL CLUSTER THREE COUNTRIES AT BOTH THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVELS.

RENDERING THE
TEACHING/LEARNING PROCESS
MORE FUTURE-ORIENTED

15

PROMOTE COOPERATION, UNDERSTANDING, AND TOLERANCE

RATIONALE

Despite the similarities in language and religion, MENA's natural barriers, long-standing conflicts, and unequally distributed oil wealth contribute to national separatism and an almost continual "warn-torn" or "war-prone" state. Yet with the technological, political, and environmental changes, countries are finding it harder to exist as entities in and of themselves and are recognizing the growing interdependence of people within a region and the world. MENA countries are just beginning to recognize their participation in a regional and global community and the need to show more of a sense of responsibility for each other. More cooperation, understanding, and tolerance need to replace the separatism and conflict that seem to predominate. Introducing children to these concepts at the primary school level helps prepare future generation to understand, accept, and support each other.

Children in MENA's war-torn countries have had unusually difficult childhoods; many have either witnessed or been subjected to violence, torture, and/or other traumatic incidents. Some have known only strife in their young lives and are in need of psychological and emotional care. Standard, traditional curricula are not entirely appropriate for students with such tragic backgrounds. These children require special attention as well as skills that will enable them to cope with their environment and participate in the building of a peaceful future in their countries.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Integrate Diversity Appreciation into Standard Curricula

Given the historically volatile nature of the MENA region, all MENA countries might benefit from the integration of preventive and protective actions to avoid conflict. Cooperative learning and diversity appreciation are approaches that are being integrated into American school instructional programmes to teach students to accept one another and work together in accomplishing goals and completing assignments.

Any school curricula could be expanded to introduce and reinforce the following:

OPENNESS: ENCOURAGING STUDENTS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE REGION AND THE PEOPLE IN IT;

NEGOTIATION: ALLOWING STUDENTS TO DISCUSS PROBLEMS AND COME TO CONSENSUS ON HOW THEY SHOULD BE ADDRESSED;

DIVERSITY: ACTIVELY AND VISIBLY RECRUITING, WELCOMING, AND SUPPORTING MALE AND FEMALE, RELIGIOUS, ETHNIC, AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS IN ALL ASPECTS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS-PLANNING, DECIDING, TEACHING, AND LEARNING; AND

TEAMWORK: HAVING DIVERSE GROUPS WORK TOGETHER IN COMPLETING CLASS, SCHOOL, AND COMMUNITY.

Concepts can be presented as separate units or integrated throughout the instruction. Teachers would be the primary presenters of this information.

Provide Needed Services to Child Victims of War

In order to best attend to the needs of the traumatized, handicapped, orphaned, and/or abandoned children of war in a school setting, advice and guidance must be sought from experts in the areas of counseling, child psychology, and general curriculum development. In addition, specialists in peace education and conflict resolution are needed to recommend ways of incorporating these important topics into curricula for children in war - affected areas.

Using these kinds of consultants, education planners should work to shape school curricula to meet the special needs of war-torn children. This type of effort is currently underway in Lebanon, where the UNICEF "Rebuilding for Peace Programme of Co-operation" is seeking to provide Lebanese youths with the intellectual, social, and physical capacity to rebuild their war-torn nation. Aside from basic skills, several curricular components emerge as central to such students' lives.

Students need practical life and survival skills, as their immediate environments can often be especially taxing and dangerous. In addition, curricula must convey basic moral values that war and civil strife too often eclipse. The reformed curricula need to emphasize several things: the value of unity, equity and peace; respect for human life; and the importance of dialogue, democracy, tolerance, and appreciation of differences. Finally, students need specialized interpersonal skills that will enable them to learn how to solve problems and resolve conflict without resorting to violence.

Provide Teachers with Specialized Training to Implement New Curricula

The development of innovative curricula for children in war-torn countries will require instructors capable of teaching these curricula effectively. In addition, teachers will need to be sensitized to the special needs of their students. Teachers need to develop the skills that will render classes more interactive and facilitate discussions that will assist students in expressing feelings and emotions, channeling energies into constructive activities, surviving difficult circumstances, and ably facing the future. The integration of peace studies and conflict resolution calls for teachers' retraining and skills upgrading if instructors are to be able to give students the skills they need to establish a more peaceful future for their nations. Teachers will need to be tolerant enough to acknowledge the strengths and beliefs of each group or country and build on those strengths.

Develop Plans That Address Instruction During Disrupted School Time

To help ensure that education is continued during times of conflict, ministries of education should establish and disseminate policies and plans during peace times. Instructional plans could include the following: situations when schools are to be dismissed and reopened; alternative types of assignments for students during disrupted periods; alternative school sites in the event that existing schools are damaged or destroyed; and guidance on how to make the transition back to school a smoother one once the conflict is over.

MOST APPROPRIATE CLUSTERS AND/OR COUNTRIES FOR THIS STRATEGY

- KUWAIT FROM CLUSTER ONE;
- SUDAN FROM CLUSTER THREE; AND
- ALL CLUSTER FOUR COUNTRIES.

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16

Conduct Innovative and Diversity-Appreciation Extracurricular Activities

RATIONALE

Standard, school-based education in isolation may not be sufficient to equip the children of disadvantaged populations and of war-torn nations to make positive contributions to a more hopeful and peaceful future. Simply revising school curricula for peace may fail to achieve optimal student skills and attitudes where establishing and maintaining peace are concerned. For these reasons, additional innovative activities and events are needed in disadvantaged communities and in war-torn countries to promote the value of co-existence, equity and peace to further the possibilities of building a future together. In Lebanon for example, an extremely popular children's magazine that aims to promote a new culture of hope, peace, and mutual understanding in the country is being disseminated via health dispensaries (UNICEF Beirut 1991). Following are two additional examples of such undertakings.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Conduct Field Trips That Bring Students from Different Backgrounds Together

In order to instill hope, tolerance, and appreciation of diversity in disadvantaged and war-torn youth, field trips could be scheduled to expose children from differing ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds to one another. On these trips, teachers or counselors might lead fun, interactive games through which children have an opportunity to mix and play together. These kinds of pleasant experiences among students at an early age would give children an instinctive sense that, despite their differences, their fellow citizens are likeable, understandable people who are similar to themselves in many ways. Without this kind of amicable interaction early in life, children in nations with hostile, factional undercurrents are likely to grow up learning to fear one another; this then becomes a tremendous obstacle to participating in building the future together and in achieving common goals and objectives.

Hold a National Children's Peace Conference or Other Similar Visible Events

Another way of promoting the value and feasibility of lasting peace would be to convene a major national peace conference for children. Students from all regions and ethnic groups would serve as delegates to a conference during which they could share ideas and stories about peace, learn conflict resolution techniques, and make friends with one another. Convention Planners could also invite Nobel Peace Prize laureates from around the world to attend and interact with the student delegates. This would bring international visibility and media coverage to the event, having the multiplier effect of communicating messages about the values of peace throughout the country and the world. A highly visible, watershed event such as this in a war-torn country might attract attention and funding from international donors, rendering such an undertaking more financially feasible.

In addition, established events such as UN celebrations can include diversity appreciation and peaceful coexistence on its agenda. Teachers could be provided ideas on how to observe the celebration in individual classrooms. Innovative projects could be featured on radio and television.

Include Life Skills as Extra-curricular Activities

Although athletics, drama, music, and art are generally considered extra-curricular activities, these may not be what is most needed or appreciated by parents in rural, disadvantaged areas. Schools that cannot integrate life skills into the formal school day might offer training in health, immunization, animal husbandry, and home technologies as after-school activities. This training might make education and school more relevant to parents and might encourage otherwise reluctant parents to keep their girls in school.

MOST APPROPRIATE CLUSTERS AND/OR COUNTRIES FOR THIS STRATEGY

- KUWAIT FROM CLUSTER ONE;
- SUDAN FROM CLUSTER THREE; AND
- ALL CLUSTER FOUR COUNTRIES.

SUPPORTING EDUCATION
THROUGH INNOVATIVE
CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

17

UTILIZE EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

RATIONALE

As defined by Lockheed, Middleton, and Nettleton (1991), educational technology is any combination of classroom materials and processes that together, "attempt to enhance or extend the instruction provided by the teacher." (Although textbooks would fit into this category they are addressed in a separate strategy for this paper). During the 1960s, educational technology was championed as a panacea for improving educational access, particularly in developing countries where teacher shortages, outdated curricula, and insufficient materials characterized educational systems. Also, a variety of educational media was introduced to reach the vast numbers of children who were not enrolled in school.

Contrary to most expectations, however, the utilization of educational media had mixed results. Despite some successful pilot projects, educational media efforts were generally not cost- effective and were difficult to sustain and expand across entire regions. In addition, no one technology appeared to be particularly effective or to be more effective than any other technology (Lockheed, Middleton, and Nettleton 1991). Many planners and practitioners concluded that the use of technology "to improve or expand formal school systems has not been proved to be and maybe never will be, a real solution to educational problems in developing countries." (Lockheed, Middleton, and Nettleton 1991).

Technological advances, the current squeeze on available resources, and new research on effective instructional strategies in developing countries, however, have motivated planners to reconsider educational technology, not as a strategy for increasing access but rather as a means for improving quality, increasing efficiency, and preparing developing world populations to compete effectively during the 21st century.

The challenge is to select technologies that achieve the desired educational goals for particular regions as cost effectively as possible. Pilot projects in Latin America/Caribbean, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia suggest that selection should be based on a variety of factors including but not limited to the following:

- THE LEVEL OF STUDENTS TO BE SERVED (I.E., PRIMARY, SECONDARY, ADULT LITERACY);
- THE QUALITY OF THE MATERIALS DESIGNED FOR USE WITH THE TECHNOLOGY;
- THE ABILITY TO SUSTAIN USE, ONCE INITIATED; AND
- TEACHERS' WILLINGNESS AND PREPAREDNESS TO PRESENT THE TECHNOLOGY.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Select and Utilize Educational Technology to Support Primary Instruction

In several MENA countries (e.g., Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Sudan, and Yemen) increasing girls' access to primary education is still a priority. Faced with dual constraints of large rural populations, where multi-grade classrooms are more common and necessary, and relatively limited resources to expend on education, these countries must determine how technology can be used to improve educational efficiency, e.g., how more children can be reached without additional resources.

For more than half of the MENA countries (Qatar, Turkey, Bahrain, U.A.E., Oman, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Tunisia, Syria, Libya, Iran, Algeria, and Iraq) that have reached or were near universal primary enrolment for girls in 1988, improving quality can be given more consideration. MENA countries, particularly their most rural areas, often have a shortage of teachers or teachers not adequately trained in the instructional content and/or the most up-to-date techniques for imparting information to students. Classroom instruction is generally characterized by more traditional methods of instruction, such as lectures, rote memorization, and little active participation by the students.

Pilot study results show that integrating the following technologies at the primary level with direct teacher instruction can build interest in the subject matter and learning as a whole while maintaining or improving the quality of instruction.

•INTERACTIVE RADIO: Unlike its more traditional counterpart, interactive radio integrates the use of a widely-accepted technology with participatory learning to make drill and practice of basic skills interactive and fun. The technology includes active and regular pupil responses, immediate and regular reinforcements, and follow-up print and nonprint activities. Although pilot-tested both as an alternative to conventional schools in very isolated areas and as a solution to teacher shortages in multi-grade classrooms where students in a particular grade may listen to five or six radio classes a day, the most typical use is a daily 20-30 minute radio lesson followed by 15-30 minutes of teacher-led activities and additional followup activities.

Interactive radio has yielded positive results in providing basic literacy instruction in at least 13 countries including Nicaragua (mathematics), Kenya (English as a Second Language), Thailand (mathematics), and the Dominican Republic (reading and mathematics). Interactive radio has been found to improve the effectiveness and appeal of stand-alone direct teaching as well as to lower instructional costs (Lockheed, Middleton, and Nettleton 1991).

A recent evaluation of the use of innovative instructional approaches in Guatemala however, suggests that if not carefully integrated, interactive radio can disrupt other classroom instruction and still not be an engaging medium. Pre-instructional preparation, follow-up, scheduling, and content of the radio instruction influence effectiveness.

•AUDIOCASETTES: A modification of the interactive radio technology is the use of audiotape recorders and accompanying audiocasettes. Once interactive radio programming is recorded, audiocassettes offer similar advantages of interactive radio yet allow teachers more flexibility and control over classroom organization and scheduling. Current technology allows tapes to be duplicated quickly and inexpensively. Solar-recharged batteries help overcome the costs associated with continued operation.

•PROGRAMMED TEACHING: Programmed teaching, the use of carefully structured lessons and activities to provide instruction, can increase the effectiveness of primary level instruction for the earlier grades, particularly with teachers who have limited training. For example, under Project IMPACT in the Philippines, programmed teaching resulted in student achievement equal or better than that of students in the more traditional classrooms, with teacher student/ratios ranging from 50-1 to 100-1. Instruction costs were cut in half (Lockheed, Middleton, and Nettleton 1991). In programmed teaching/learning environments, students work with teachers at the lowest levels, gradually building their independence such that by the third grade they are working independently with their peers, with teachers providing support to groups and individual students as needed.

•ELECTRONIC LEARNING AIDS: While primary level students can benefit from computer-assisted instruction, a recent study shows that any microprocessor-driven device appropriate for the elementary level in developing countries should be small, durable, self-contained, and battery-operated (IIR n.d.). Electronic learning aids meet those qualifications. With their basic hardware and game-like routines, electronic learning aids provide exposure to new technology as well as drill and practice of some of the very basic, primary skills in a way that is more interesting and motivational. For example, under a recent learning technologies project, Texas Instruments' Speak and Math and Speak and Read were pilot-tested and enthusiastically received in rural areas of Belize. A similar project was conducted in Lesotho.

•EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION: Although factors such as passive learning, scheduling restrictions, expense, and reputation as an entertainment medium have rendered educational television a relatively less-used classroom technology, children's educational programmes can be appealing and can generate interest in learning if they are culturally relevant to the target audience. For example, the widely-acclaimed U.S. pre-school programme, Sesame Street, was extremely successful in Kuwait when translated and adapted to reflect the Middle Eastern environment and culture. Because these modifications have been made, re-adapting the program where needed and broadcasting it in other MENA countries may be cost-effective. Educational television seems to be a more promising medium, however, in reaching girls and women who are not in school (See Strategy 18).

•OTHER NONPRINT MEDIA: In poorer countries, where the use of advanced technologies may not be possible, creative cost-effective approaches can be integrated to vary traditional

classroom instruction. Role plays, puppet shows, drama, and oral presentations are effective alternatives.

Select and Utilize Appropriate Technology at the Secondary Level

The secondary level student has different learning needs and therefore technology needs than the primary level student. Beyond the stage of basic drill and practice, secondary level students need more analytical work, specialized instruction, and preparation for the world of work. Pilot studies suggest the use of the following types of technologies to help achieve these goals.

•COMPUTER-ASSISTED INSTRUCTION: Computer-assisted instruction (CAI) can provide direct instruction and bring about improvements in student achievement in developing world countries. For example, in Grenada, a country with poorly trained teachers, inadequate curriculum, and limited materials, CAI increased achievement in math and to a lesser degree in language for secondary students It is important to note that girls achieved at the same level as boys (IIR n.d.). Yet, even without significant gains in achievement, there is a push to use computers in schools to develop computer-literate populations who can function successfully in national and world contexts.

Unfortunately, cost, technological difficulties (i.e., climate, electricity, dust, etc.), appropriate hardware, and teachers' willingness and ability to use the computers have prohibited more widespread use at all levels. Because of computers' use in the work environment, students must be prepared. The challenge is therefore to the make most effective use of whatever resources are available for purchasing and using computers in secondary classrooms. Planners should consider the following before making any major purchases:

- **Supporting Materials:** Is the available software culturally and linguistically appropriate for the students who will be using it?

- **Compatibility:** Can the hardware and/or software be linked or used with other technology already purchased?

- **Storage and Maintenance:** Where will equipment be housed and stored such that physical conditions (e.g., dust, heat) will not negate any major investments? How will equipment be repaired if broken or jammed?

- **Technological Capability:** Is there sufficient power to operate the technology? If batteries are used, are there funds to replace them?

- **Teacher Ability:** How will teachers be introduced to the new technology? How trained to operate the technology and integrate its use into existing classroom schedules?

If resources cannot be provided at each school, computers and videos could be made available to communities through special educational centers. Centers could be open in the afternoons and during vacations. Students enrolled in formal and non-formal schools as well as out-of-school girls could be encouraged to utilize the center.

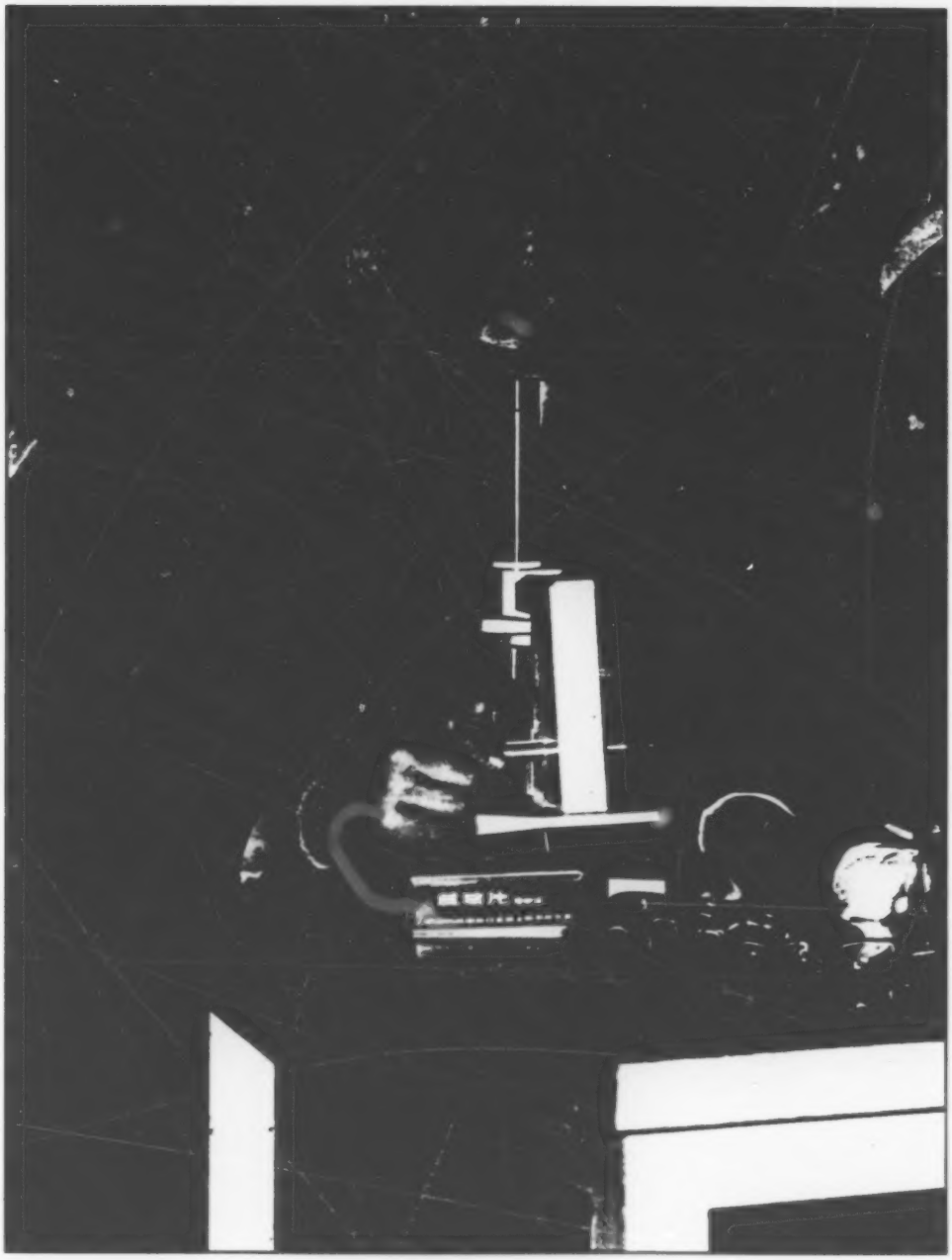
•EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION: Again, although broadcasting educational television has not proven to be particularly effective as a substitute for direct instruction or to enrich classroom instruction (Lockheed, Middleton, and Nettleton 1991), the use of VCRs and videocassettes provide teachers with more flexibility and programme selection. Interactive television, where teachers or students can interrupt the show, do an activity, and restart the programme for immediate feedback, is also a promising use of the technology and could turn videocassettes into the participatory type of learning that is more effective. In rural areas, where smaller schools may not offer the breadth of instruction offered in urban secondary schools, videotaped lessons may be shared. Because these lessons can be viewed at the students' convenience, this could allow even greater flexibility to girls who have domestic responsibilities and irregular schedules. Students can be tested and graded based on what they have learned. Tapes could even be available at libraries so that students could take classes at home.

Utilize Technology to Improve Management and Monitor Progress

At the administrative level, computers can be invaluable in compiling and reporting statistics; monitoring local, regional, and national performance; and preparing budgets. Planners should consider using computers for the following activities:

- IDENTIFYING WHERE SCHOOLS ARE NEEDED, (I.E., THE MAPPING OF SCHOOLS; SEE STRATEGY 6);
- MAINTAINING RECORDS OF STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND ACHIEVEMENT;
- MONITORING DISPARITIES BETWEEN GIRLS' AND BOYS' ENROLMENT, PERSISTENCE, AND COMPLETION RATES; AND
- PREPARING AND MODIFYING BUDGETS AND MONITORING EXPENDITURES.

• ALL MENA COUNTRIES.



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18

Instill Basic Skills in Out-of-school Girls

RATIONALE

Statistics on girls' secondary school enrolment show that throughout MENA large percentages of teenage girls are not in school. As in much of the developing world, girls who are not in school generally pursue one of three options: they work; they marry and have children; or they stay home with their parents until they are married and help with household chores. Achieving universal education requires interventions that can accommodate the needs of girls at these stages.

Statistics on the number of radios and televisions per 1,000 inhabitants in the different MENA countries show a very high presence of these two media in at least eight countries (see Figure 15). This high coverage is thought to be due to the buying power of individuals in those countries. Also, when statistics from the Arab countries are compared with those from non-Arab African countries or to non-Arab Asian countries, the number of radios and televisions per 1,000 inhabitants is much higher in the Arab states. In 1988 the average number of televisions and radios per 1,000 inhabitants in the Arab states were respectively 90 and 245; during that same year, African countries averaged 14 televisions and 142 radios per 1,000 inhabitants, and Asian countries averaged 52 televisions and 180 radios per 1,000 inhabitants. The region also has a large pool of radio and television professionals with the expertise to produce quality educational programmes for children, teens, and families."[4]

Developing countries have historically invested more on entertainment programmes than educational or public service media programming. The wide availability of television and radio to the region's masses as well as to its elite, however, suggests a rethinking of these programming priorities. Given the high percentage of teenage girls who are not in school, the prevalence of television and radio in most MENA countries, and these media's established capacity to inform, instruct, persuade, and elevate issues, instilling basic skills in teenage girls through the media can become a necessary intervention.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Design Alternative Learning Programmes for Out-of-school Girls

To be most effective, any non-formal instruction should be relevant to the target group's needs and should be designed to acknowledge the competing demands. In poorer countries, where out-of-school girls are expected to work and help with household chores, non-formal educational programmes can provide basic literacy instruction without the structure of formal schools. One programme, the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), has been very successful in reaching girls who otherwise might not attend school. An important element of BRAC is its innovative scheduling, with 2-3 hour school days and regular breaks throughout the year to respect girls' daily and seasonal workloads. Afternoon and evening instruction, facilities that are easily accessible, and free child care might also increase the likelihood that young mothers can and will attend. Programmes with one or more of these components have been successfully implemented in Jamaica, Dominica, Montserrat, and Saint Lucia. Also, small community learning centers with two rooms - a reading/sharing room and a room where out-of-school girls can study in the evenings - has worked successfully in rural India (UNICEF Education 1991).

In regions where health and welfare are a particular concern, non-formal literacy programmes could include health, family life education, child development, and food processing in addition to the academic training.

Use Television and Radio to Encourage Continued Learning

For those teenage girls who do not enrol in formal or non-formal schools, the media can be used to disseminate information and skills to them. Because watching television and listening to the radio are major activities, educators can use these two media to enlighten them on the extent of the literacy problem, raise their awareness about the importance of literacy and basic skills, show community support and acceptance of teen girls continuing their education, recognize those girls who participate in and complete literacy programmes. The media can also be used to teach and promote basic life skills to girls who would otherwise be unreach-

able. Concepts affecting basic health, sanitation, food processing, and family planning could be introduced.

To accomplish these, MENA countries should work with national programmes to do the following:

- INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF TIME, ATTENTION, AND PRODUCTION RESOURCES USED TO DEVELOP NEW EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES;
- IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EXISTING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES THROUGH THE USE OF STATE-OF-THE ART TECHNOLOGIES AND METHODOLOGIES AND PRE-PRODUCTION PLANNING AND RESEARCH; AND
- CAREFULLY INCORPORATE EDUCATIONAL MESSAGES INTO POPULAR ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMMES.[75]

Television and radio stations might do the following:

- ATTRACT TEENAGE GIRLS AS A SPECIAL AUDIENCE BY BROADCASTING PROGRAMMES THAT FULLY INTEREST THEM, BY DISCUSSING ISSUES AND TOPICS THAT ARE CONSIDERED PRIORITY FOR TEEN-GIRLS, AND BY INTEGRATING WITHIN THOSE PROGRAMMES EDUCATIONAL MESSAGES;
- DESIGN AND BROADCAST ENTERTAINING PROGRAMMES, POSSIBLY GAME SHOWS, THAT FOCUS ON SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES SUCH AS NUTRITION, SANITATION, RECYCLING, WATER, AGRICULTURE, PLANTS; FOOD PROCESSING, ETC.; AND
- DISSEMINATE INFORMATION ABOUT AVAILABLE SERVICES IN FIELDS SUCH AS BASIC HEALTH CLINICS, ACCESSIBILITY OF CREDIT PROGRAMS, AND OTHERS.

Television networks in some countries, such as France, often use their programmes to integrate pressing social issues into story lines of prime time programmes and daytime soap operas. Whenever possible, education planners should request that this be done on network shows in MENA countries as well.

Other innovative print and non-print media such as posters, buttons, tee shirts, hats, and drama programmes also could be used to promote academic and functional literacy.

Build Capacity Regionally to Promote Literacy Through Media Technology

MENA countries have committed themselves to the worldwide effort to improve health and education for all people. Because most MENA countries share a common language, they may be able to maximize the impact of any production through inter-regional exchange. Strong regional organizations, including those with an interest in broadcasting such as ALECSO, the Arab States Broadcasting Union, and the Middle East Broadcasting Company, already exist. Also, UNICEF has developed a worldwide compendium of educational and health television programmes. These organizations and resources could be tapped to support national literacy efforts. More specifically, as recommended in UNICEF MENA's Communication for Learning document, planners might consider the following:

- A REGIONAL RESOURCE CENTER, WHERE PROGRAMMES, RESEARCH, AND IDEAS CAN BE SHARED BY PLANNERS AND PRODUCERS;
- A COOPERATIVE, WORLDWIDE TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK WHERE EXPERIENCES AND CHILD EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMMES CAN BE ACCESSED;
- REGIONAL ENDOWMENTS TO STIMULATE EXCELLENCE IN CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMES;
- EXPANSION OF THE UNICEF COMPENDIUM OF TELEVISION PROGRAMMES; AND
- A REGIONAL MEDIA STRATEGY TO BE ADOPTED BY THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES.

Most Appropriate Clusters under Consideration

- ALL MENA COUNTRIES.

Figure 16

Media per 1,000 Inhabitants in MENA Countries, 1988

Country[1]	No. of Televisions per 1,000 Inhabitants	No. of Radio Receivers per 1,000 Inhabitants	No. of Daily Newspapers per 1,000 Inhabitants
Oman	740	649	45
Qatar	425	509	210
Bahrain	400	525	61
Lebanon	302	773	113
Saudi Arabia	269	280	41
Kuwait	262	329	210
Turkey	172	161	75
U.A.E.	107	321	205
Egypt	84	312	84
Algeria	71	229	21
Jordan	70	238	53
Libya	70	223	17
Tunisia	69	180	33
Iraq	68	200	36
Syria	59	244	24
Morocco	55	207	14
Iran	53	237	25
Sudan	53	233	26
Djibouti	52	89	***
West Bank & Gaza	***	***	***
Yemen	***	96	***

Source
UNESCO 1991

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ENHANCING
FEMALE
ADULT LITERACY

19

INTEGRATE PARENT/CHILD EDUCATION TO IMPROVE ADULT FEMALE LITERACY

RATIONALE

With an estimated 62 per cent of female adult illiterates in the Arab World, reducing female adult illiteracy should have a significant impact on the total adult illiteracy rate in the region. In addition to its importance in reducing the adult illiteracy rate, adult female literacy is an essential element in increasing the demand for universal education for girls. Research shows that educated mothers are more likely to educate their children and place more importance on their children's education, particularly their girls' education. Educated mothers also are more capable of helping their children in completing their homework. Educating women has a multiplier effect, helping to ensure girls' education for generations to come.

Several factors contribute to high illiteracy rates among women in developing countries. One is the type of literacy instruction that is provided. The traditional adult literacy centers used by many countries to train adult illiterates generally have not proven very successful. Their limited success has been attributed, at least in part, to the following: class instruction inappropriate for adult audiences; an emphasis on basic literacy and numeracy skills with little inclusion of skills that can assist adults in gaining employment; the absence of relevance or immediate utility; the integration of literacy with too many other development initiatives, including health, family planning, and nutrition; poorly trained teachers; and the instruction of women and younger girls in the same classes, which sometimes makes older women feel embarrassed.

A second factor is the extent to which women are able to use their newly - acquired literacy skills in their daily life. In oil-rich countries such as Kuwait where resources are available and trained workers are needed in the labor force, women's adult literacy programmes are supported enthusiastically by the government, and women are encouraged to participate. In regions where employment opportunities for women are limited and resources are scarce, however, adult female literacy may be less of a priority. In addition, in poor and isolated areas where there are few opportunities to practice the acquired skills or apply new knowledge, women often lose acquired skills and "relapse" into illiteracy. As stated by Ouane and Anon-Tanoh (1990), new literates need to be "immersed in an environment in which they must permanently face the challenge of the written word. "

A third factor affecting adult female literacy is male attitudes. Many Middle Eastern men, especially those in remote traditional areas, do not want their wives to learn too much. They feel intimidated and are fearful that educated wives will not want to continue to serve in their traditional roles.

Interventions are needed that will introduce/reintroduce women to the learning environment, involve them in meaningful programmes, allow them, whether employed or unemployed, to use the acquired skills, and present the benefits of female education to the men of the region, not only to the key decision-makers who set national policies but also to men in the community who are reluctant to let their wives or daughters attend school.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Conduct Country-specific Needs Assessments of Adult Female Literacy

Countries within MENA have different female adult literacy needs. For example, one group of countries—Qatar, Turkey, Bahrain, Jordan, and Kuwait—have reached at least 66 per cent adult female literacy rates. Their approaches to adult literacy have proven reasonably effective, but could be modified to give more attention to those hardest to reach. A second group of countries—Oman, Tunisia, Syria, Libya, UAE, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, and Morocco—have literacy rates between 34 and 65 per cent. Generally, these are middle-income countries, although some are low-income countries and two are considered oil-rich and therefore have resources to expend. The final group includes Sudan and Yemen, where 88 per cent and 74 per cent of the female adults are illiterate respectively. Djibouti, also included in this final group, has an illiteracy rate of 80 per cent for both men and women.

Every country should have an adult literacy programme that gives special focus to the education of adult women. Governments who do not have existing programmes should commit some portion of the educational budget for structured adult literacy programmes that are free and available to every woman who wants to attend.

In addition, regardless of the literacy rate, each country should answer the following questions:

- How many adults are illiterate?
- How many of those are female?
- Where are they located? In urban or rural areas?
- What programmes are already in place? How effective are the teachers, the instructional programmes, and the materials?
- What resources are available to be channeled to this effort? What facilities are available for use?
- How accessible is the literacy instruction? How does the number of adult literacy centers compare with the numbers of adult illiterates? Are centers convenient to those in rural as well as urban areas? Are the hours of operation convenient for women who want to attend? Are the facilities appropriate and conducive for adult learning? Are there sufficient quantities of books and other materials?
- Are the teachers aware of the nuances of teaching basic skills to adults? Is the training linked with employment?

Answers to these questions should be compiled into a detailed description and used to develop a plan of action.

Create Family Literacy Programmes

Family literacy programmes are family-centered educational programmes that are designed to help parents become partners in their children's education. They allow parents to assist their children in achieving and at the same time provide literacy training for the parents. One such example is Even Start, a U.S. Department of Education programme that is modelled somewhat after the United States' Head Start programme. Even Start, which serves families in areas with high levels of poverty, unemployment, and limited language proficiency, integrates early childhood education and adult literacy training by involving the parents in their children's educational programme. Parents must participate in adult literacy and parenting education activities, including activities where the parents and children are involved together. Home visits are also a part of the programme. Projects are tailored to the specific needs of the community. Programmes may be intensive—with parents receiving training four days a week. Projects can also be less formal, with mothers using self-instructional materials at home and coming to the center for group sessions once a week. Variations of family literacy programmes also exist.

Recent research by the National Center for Family (1991a and b) shows that "at-risk" children involved in family literacy programmes during their early years are eager learners in elementary school and do not repeat primary grades as much as other at-risk children. Adults also benefit. Family literacy centers are unique in that parents and children come to the same facility to learn, although they are taught in separate groups.

Modifications of this programme may prove successful, particularly in rural areas where the demand for adult literacy is not great, because it can do the following:

- introduce reluctant mothers to school and learning in a non-threatening manner;
- provide female illiterates of similar ages an opportunity to learn and practice literacy skills in an atmosphere designed specifically for adults;
- bring mothers and children together at one site, providing mutual encouragement and support;
- provide parents not only with literacy and numeracy skills but also parenting skills and job training;
- provide opportunities for mothers to experience the joy of learning and observe the benefits of their daughters receiving an education; and
- allow mothers opportunities to learn while still performing their traditional roles as mothers and homemakers.

Family literacy programmes in MENA might have the following elements:

- PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN ENROLLED AT THE EARLY PRIMARY LEVEL;
- HALF-DAY PARENT CLASSES SO THAT MOTHERS COULD STILL PERFORM DOMESTIC DUTIES WHILE ACQUIRING SKILLS; AND
- LOCALLY TRAINED TEACHERS TO PROVIDE INSTRUCTION AND SERVE AS ROLE MODELS.

Unlike the U.S. family literacy centers, which focus only on literacy, numeracy, and parenting, family literacy could combine basic instruction with some form of job training.

Adopting this approach in rural areas should improve adult female literacy but more importantly should result in mothers who are better able to help their children with their homework, are more comfortable with school, are more convinced of the benefits that school can provide, and are more committed to sending their children to school. Children of participating families should also be better prepared for first grade.

MOST APPROPRIATE FOR [illegible] COUNTRIES IN THIS STRATEGY:

- UAE AND OMAN FROM CLUSTER ONE;
- ALL CLUSTER TWO COUNTRIES;
- ALL CLUSTER THREE COUNTRIES; AND
- IRAN AND IRAQ FROM CLUSTER FOUR.

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20

Utilize a Diversity of Channels to Improve Female Adult Literacy

RATIONALE

As stated earlier, MENA has more televisions than other developing regions despite its status as a developing region and has almost as many televisions per 1000 people as the industrialized world. Radios are also widely prevalent. In MENA, the women's home is her primary domain. Most adult women are not at work; the society expects them to be there to raise the children and care for the home. While at home women listen frequently to radio programmes and watch television. Women tend to have more access to these two media channels than men. Promoting literacy to women would be more effective if these important media vehicles are used.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Utilize Television and Radio to Promote Literacy

This technology can be used not so much to teach literacy as has been tried in some developing countries in the previous decade, but rather to increase awareness about the importance of female literacy, change attitudes, and encourage compliance with existing educational laws. The population of MENA in general, and women in particular, has been known to represent a receptive audience to television and radio programmes that focus on some basic themes such as family unity, loyalty, and patriotism. Through similar programmes, themes about the importance of literacy can be introduced and emphasized; the educational, social, and economic benefits of women's literacy can be highlighted, and the linkages between literacy and health issues can be clarified. These television and radio programmes should target the following groups:

- OLDER WOMEN, AGED 40 AND OLDER, WHO OFTEN FEEL THAT THEY ARE TOO OLD TO LEARN AND THAT THERE IS NO REASON FOR THEM TO LEARN; AND
- HUSBANDS AND FATHERS, PARTICULARLY THOSE IN RURAL AREAS, WHO FEEL THAT THERE IS NO NEED FOR GIRLS TO ATTEND SCHOOL.

All would be convinced by showing how education can help women perform better in the family, community, and home.

MOST APPROPRIATE CLUSTERS AND/OR COUNTRIES FOR THIS STRATEGY

- ALL MENA COUNTRIES.

V

Conclusions and Next Steps

DEVELOPING A NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR improving girls' education is the next step for each MENA country if universal primary education is to be achieved. The rationale for policy dialogue and the recommended strategies provided in the previous chapters can be useful in formulating educational plans of action and in establishing priorities.

The plan of action should identify milestone dates from now until the year 2000 and list objectives for each identified interval to address the country's specific needs. For example, to achieve universal primary education by the year 2000, cluster one countries will need to improve girls' retention at the primary level. Related objectives might be to reduce the dropout rate by 50 per cent by 1995 and by 85 per cent by 1998. Strategies and interventions to improve school attendance and retention that are most appropriate for the country's underserved populations would then be selected. Illustrative ideas for "jump-starting" activities are included in Appendix B.

In developing the plan, policy makers and planners alike might find it useful to consider the following findings that were culled from the analysis of the educational progress in the region and the strategies that seemed most appropriate:

❍

THE REGION IS ON THE RIGHT TRACK IN TERMS OF GIRLS' PRIMARY EDUCATION.

There has been significant progress in the provision of education for both boys and girls.The region now needs an accelerated process for narrowing the gender gap, educational strategies that will improve girls' persistence rates, particularly in rural areas, and more concerted efforts to increase and sustain female literacy. Successful projects and approaches being used in the region should be documented and shared. National planners can make adaptations and modifications based on local needs.

❍

A COUNTRY DOES NOT HAVE TO BE WEALTHY IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION.

While there is a positive correlation between GNP per capita and primary enrolment, a high GNP is not a prerequisite for educational success. The educational progress in Turkey and Jordan has shown that middle-income countries can provide education for all. Equally important or perhaps even more important than financial resources is the political will to make education a priority. Adequate government allotments for education, compulsory education policies, and laws prohibiting early marriage provide visible evidence of political commitment. It should be noted, however, that these do not in and of themselves bring about change.

❍

GIRLS MUST BE EDUCATED.

Social and economic changes no longer permit societies to exclude girls and women from the development process in communities, regions, and countries. More and more, labor forces requires men and women that have basic literacy and/or technical skills. Even in countries where education does not translate immediately into full-time employment, female literacy is still essential to address such social issues as infant and child mortality, child immunization, life expectancy, and inter-generational education.

IF GIRLS' PARTICIPATION IS TO BE ACHIEVED, SCHOOLS MUST MEET GIRLS' PHYSICAL, CULTURAL, AND LEARNING NEEDS.

At a physical level, schools must satisfy individual and family requirements for safety and comfort. Closer schools, sex-segregated classes, more female presence in the classroom, and more relevant and gender-sensitive curricula provide greater access as well as moral support, role models, and a learning environment that will help attract girls to school and keep them there.

FEMALES MUST BE MORE INVOLVED AT ALL LEVELS OF THE EDUCATIONAL/LEARNING PROCESS.

Women should be more involved in the school itself—as volunteers, teachers, headmistresses, counselors, assistant teachers, and even as learners. Parent/child programmes may serve the dual purposes of engaging both mothers and daughters in learning situations. In addition, females must be more involved in the decision-making process at the local, regional, and central levels.

THE USE OF THE MEDIA AND OTHER TECHNOLOGIES SHOULD BE CAREFULLY RE-EVALUATED TO IDENTIFY THEIR MAXIMUM EFFECTIVENESS IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION.

New uses of older technologies have been developed; research has proven some technologies less effective than others. The use of technology in formal classroom situations at the primary and secondary levels should be carefully assessed against costs and student gains. Because of the now widespread availability of radio and television in MENA homes, media may also be used to generate interest and provide basic literacy and life skills to girls who are not in school and to women who are at home during the day.

THE FUTURE MUST BE TAUGHT.

While it is important for students to learn the rich history of a particular country, the world is no longer a place where a people or culture can exist in isolation. Students need more exposure to other peoples, cultures, and ideas. Critical thinking and problem solving are the most needed skills to empower the new generations in dealing with their future. Girls and women, like boys and men, not only need to be trained in basic literacy and numeracy but also should be introduced to critical thinking and to new technologies.

WAR IS A DETERRENT TO EDUCATIONAL PARTICIPATION FOR GIRLS AS WELL AS BOYS.

At best, war uses resources that could be used for other educational purposes and diverts attention from education. At worst, war results in razed buildings, limited supplies, disrupted schedules, and traumatized children who know physical confrontation as the primary way to resolve conflict. Peace in the region would allow national leaders to focus more on domestic issues, address the needs of physically and emotionally traumatized children, and channel more financial resources towards education in general, and primary and girls' education in particular.

TO FACILITATE STUDENT TRACKING AND MONITORING AND THE EVALUATION OF THE BENEFITS OF EDUCATION AND LEARNING, MORE DATA, AGGREGATED BY GENDER, SHOULD BE COLLECTED ON A REGULAR BASIS.

Countries need to establish and/or expand systems and procedures to facilitate the collection and maintenance of data on primary and secondary enrolment and completion rates, gaps in male and female participation, and female adult literacy. Within countries, ministries should develop data collection procedures that also allow comparisons of educational progress in rural and urban areas. At the school level, attendance and dropout should be aggregated regularly. Data on the numbers of teachers, by gender would also be helpful.

Finally, to be effective, any action should acknowledge the following two "conditions of success":

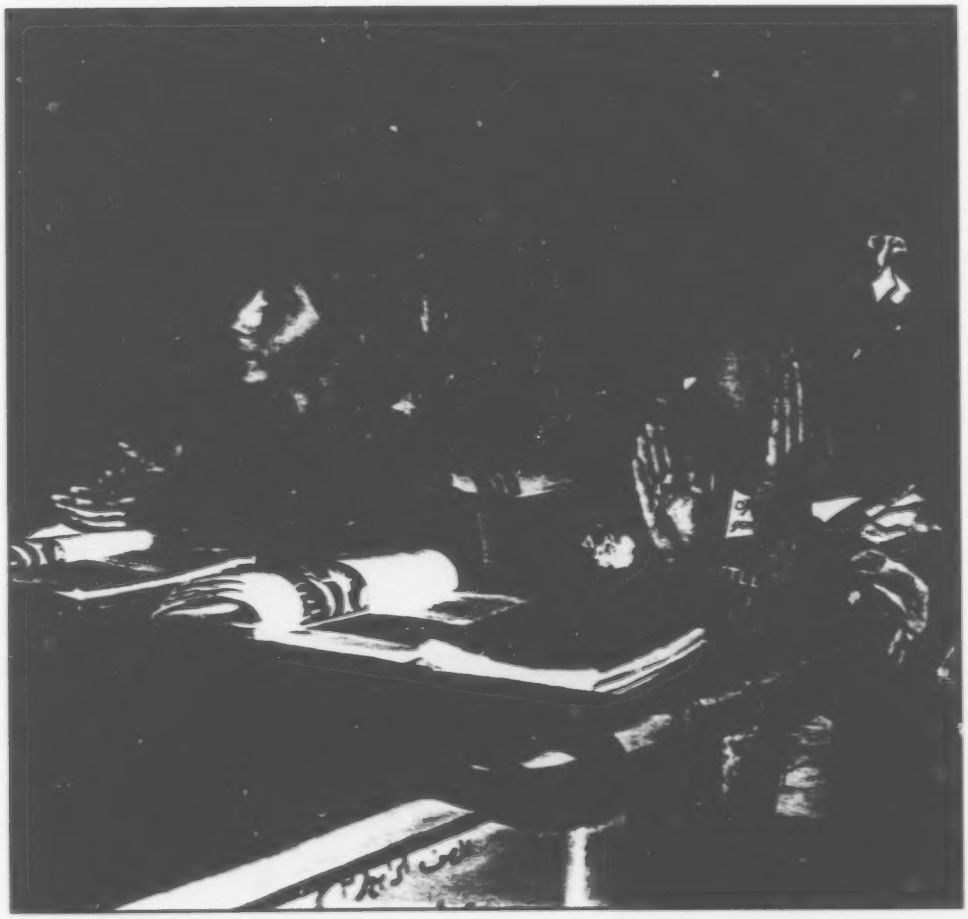
POLITICAL WILL AND A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT ARE ESSENTIAL TO LONG-TERM PROGRAMME SUCCESS.

Girls' education cannot become a reality unless national leaders are firmly committed to it. This commitment must be articulated to the community and supported through meaningful allocations of resources and personnel. Although individual strategies may bring about positive results, success cannot be sustained unless there is a national commitment to girls' education and a continuous effort to reduce the gap between the boys and the girls.

IF UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION IS TO BE ACHIEVED, GIRLS' EDUCATION MUST BECOME THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY.

To be effective, girls' education initiatives cannot be the business of the Ministry of Education alone. Closing the educational gap between boys and girls should be the business of the entire community. The status of girls' education and female literacy is the result of a complex web of social, cultural, economic, and political factors; reversing the years of non-participation will require a sustained effort in a variety of arenas. An effective initiative should involve different ministries, businesses, religious groups, other social service providers, civic organizations, local leaders, the media, and all other key actors in the community.

WITH COMBINED EFFORTS, THE GOAL WILL BE ACHIEVED.



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23 In 1987, girls' persistence rates in the following countries were 80 per cent or less: Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Yemen, and Iraq.

24 Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Yemen Arab Republic, and People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

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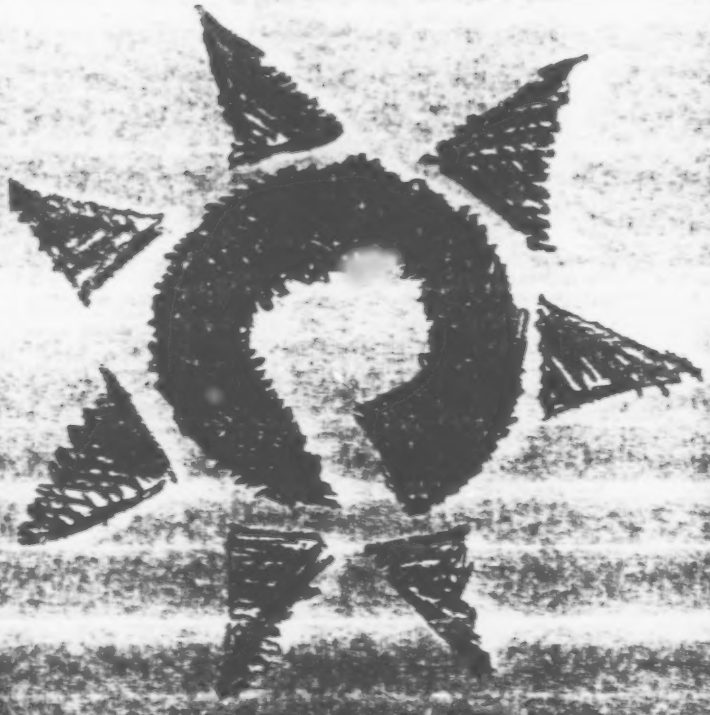

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Appendix A

Workshop on Strategies for Female Education in Mena

AMMAN, JORDAN
FEBRUARY 16-17, 1993

Workshop Participants

Mr. Tawfiq Al-Mekhlafi	Researcher, Educational Research Center, Sana'a, Yemen
Ms. Leila Aslaoui	Former Minister of Youth and Justice and Appointee to the Supreme Court, Algeria
Dr. Balgees Badri	Associate Professor, Khartoum University; Lecturer at AHFAD College for Girls'/Women's Education, Sudan
Dr. Kamal Dwami	National Center for Educational Research and Development, Amman, Jordan
Mr. Nigel Fisher	Deputy Regional Director/Area Representative, UNICEF Amman
Dr. Khalil Ibrahim Hammash	Director of International Section, Ministry of Education, Baghdad, Iraq
Dr. Abid Zeid Abdul Hussain	Manager of Kindergarten Section, Ministry of Education/MOE Representative on the Iraq National Committee for UNICEF
Ms. Nuhad Kanawati	Senior Programme Officer, UNICEF Amman
Mr. Edward Lannert	Regional Director, UNICEF Amman
Dr. Golnar Mehran	Education Consultant and Lecturer at Tehran University, Iran
Ms. Niloufar Pourzand	Programme Officer (Education), UNICEF Tehran, Iran
Dr. Antoon Rahmeh	Dean of Faculty of Education, Damascus University, Syria
Dr. Pilar Retamal	Education Consultant, Djibouti
Dr. Ziad Rifai'	Consultant, Communications for Learning, UNICEF Amman and Development, Amman, Jordan
Ms. May Rihani	Vice President, Creative Associates International,Inc., Education and Training Services Division, Washington, DC
Mr. Andre Roberfoid	UNICEF Representative, Iran
Ms. Nurper Ulkuer	Project Officer (Education), UNICEF Ankara, Turkey
Mr. Ekrem Yangin	Director-General Of Primary Education, Turkey

Appendix B

Ideas for "Jump-starting" Girls' Education in MENA Countries

At the "Strategies for Female Education in MENA Workshop" held in Amman on February 16-17, 1993, workshop participants suggested the following activities to use in "jump-starting" girls' education programmes in a particular MENA country:

- BUILD ALLIANCES;
- PROMOTE THE NOTION OF SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR GIRLS' EDUCATION IN THE REGION (E.G., THROUGH TWINNING GIRLS' SCHOOLS IN POOR COUNTRIES AND OIL-RICH COUNTRIES IN THE REGION AND COLLECTING A RIYAL/DINAR/DIRHAM FROM EACH STUDENT IN THE OIL-RICH TWIN SCHOOL);
- INSTALL A WASHROOM AND/OR WELL AND LATRINE IN EACH SCHOOL;
- RAISE CONSCIOUSNESS WITH MEASURES SUCH AS AN INTERNATIONAL YEAR FOR GIRLS' EDUCATION OR A NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GIRLS' EDUCATION OPENED BY THE HEAD OF STATE;
- RUN TRAINING WORKSHOPS FOR EDUCATION PLANNERS IN EACH COUNTRY ON HOW TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE GIRLS' EDUCATION;
- INSTITUTE SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMMES;
- REDIRECT FOOD-FOR-WORK PROGRAMMES TO GIRLS' SCHOOLS' CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS;
- PROVIDE COMMUNITY INCENTIVES FOR ACHIEVING STATED GIRLS' EDUCATION TARGETS (E.G., ENROLMENT AND PERSISTENCE TARGETS);
- CREATE/STIMULATE COMPETITION BETWEEN SCHOOLS, COMMUNITIES, AND REGIONS WITH RESPECT TO STATED GIRLS' EDUCATION TARGETS;
- RECOGNISE/UTILISE FEMALE TEACHERS AS AGENTS FOR EXPANDING AND PROMOTING GIRLS' EDUCATION;
- DEVELOP INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY MATERIALS TARGETED TO SPECIFIC AUDIENCES (E.G., PARENTS, COMMUNITY LEADERS, EDUCATION OFFICIALS, ETC.) ON THE BENEFITS AND IMPORTANCE OF GIRLS' EDUCATION;
- IDENTIFY FEMALE ROLE MODELS TO BE USED IN THE PROMOTION OF GIRLS' EDUCATION;
- DEVELOP MEDIA PROGRAMMES WITH FEMALE ROLE MODELS AND FEMALE TEACHERS;
- PLACE THE OBJECTIVE OF "GIRL FRIENDLY SCHOOLS" ON POLITICAL PARTY MANIFESTOS;
- INSTITUTE A "NATIONAL HEROES DAY," WHERE AN IMPORTANT POLITICAL FIGURE AWARDS MEDALS TO COMMUNITIES AND/OR SCHOOLS THAT HAVE ACHIEVED STATED GIRLS' ENROLMENT AND PERSISTENCE TARGETS;
- STRENGTHEN LINKS BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY;
- TARGET PORTION OF ZAQAT FUNDS TO SPONSOR SCHOLARSHIPS FOR HIGH-ACHIEVING GIRLS FROM LOW-INCOME FAMILIES TO COMPLETE THEIR EDUCATION;
- MOBILISE WOMEN'S GROUPS AND THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT GENERALLY TO ACT AS AGENTS FOR THE PROMOTION OF GIRLS' EDUCATION;
- ESTABLISH A REGIONAL NGO WITH BRANCHES IN EACH MENA COUNTRY TO ACT AS A FOCAL POINT FOR PROMOTING GIRLS' EDUCATION;
- ATTRACT THE HEAD OF STATE'S PERSONAL INTEREST IN ACHIEVING A STATED GIRLS' EDUCATION TARGET(S) (E.G., INCREASE IN GIRLS' ENROLMENT OR RETENTION);
- ESTABLISH A SPECIAL FUND FOR EDUCATION OUTSIDE THE MOE FOR TACKLING SPECIAL EDUCATION ISSUES (TO PERHAPS BE FUNDED BY DIVERTING A PERCENTAGE OF TAXES ON ALCOHOL AND CIGARETTES);
- MOBILISE FEMALE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TO ACT AS AGENTS FOR PROMOTING GIRLS' EDUCATION IN THEIR HOME VILLAGES (E.G., TO ACT AS GROUP LEADERS IN SUMMER CAMPS FOR GIRLS);
- MOBILISE GIRL STUDENTS TO BECOME TEACHERS IN THEIR HOME VILLAGES (WITH PRIORITY GIVEN TO HIGH-ACHIEVING GIRL STUDENTS);
- ENCOURAGE THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO PLAY A LARGER ROLE IN THE PROMOTION, EXPANSION, AND IMPROVEMENT OF GIRLS' EDUCATION; AND
- PROVIDE A SUBSIDY TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS OPERATING IN UNDER-PRIVILEGED COMMUNITIES MEETING STATED GIRLS' EDUCATION CRITERIA.

Appendix C

Reaching Universal Primary Education Goals for Girls and Women by the Year 2000: A 7-Year Plan of Action

Phase I: Planning, Assessment, and Systems Development - YEAR 1 -

- Obtain and/or widely disseminate written/verbal commitment from national leadership to support universal primary education, particularly girls' education
- Develop/strengthen/publicize laws requiring compulsory primary education for all
- Complete comprehensive assessment of current program status, members served, needs, resources, school locations, etc.
- Involve women in the planning and decision-making process (central as well as regional and local governing boards; teacher training institutes)
- Contact/re-contact NGOs to discuss support of non-formal approaches
- Modify incentive packages to attract more women
- Finalize comprehensive plan and budget
- Develop/strengthen female literacy promotion campaign (strategy and materials)
- Establish data base; acquire needed hardware and software
- Provide training on date collection and analysis
- Develop/implement system for monitoring attendance and dropouts
- Identify diagnostic instruments for measuring literacy
- Establish regional resource center so that successful programs and materials can be shared
- Assess use of educational technology in instructional and administrative settings

Phase II: Program Implementation - YEARS 2-4 -

- Build/establish small primary schools close to communities (must have latrines)
- Build latrines in existing schools
- Create sex-segregated environments
- Modify instructional design to allow more flexibility (flexible scheduling, more individualized instruction, etc.)
- Provide textbooks and other instructional materials
- Improve and expand the use of educational technology, particularly in rural areas
- Offer non-formal learning opportunities as appropriate
- Provide teacher training closer to communities
- Provide in-service teacher training to prepare teachers to integrate girls' and women's issues into existing curricula and content
- Employ women in other capacities at the school (as teacher's assistants, volunteers, counselors, etc)
- Reform curriculum and instructional materials to make them more gender-sensitive
- Hire more female teachers
- Link curriculum with income-generating activities and employment opportunities

- Launch revised national literacy campaign via radio and television; use women as primary spokespersons
- Strengthen NGOs already providing literacy training to adult females
- Establish family/child centers

Phase III: Program Consolidation
- YEARS 3-5 -

- Re-examine program objectives and approaches; measure outputs
- Convene decision makers and program implementors to discuss progress and lessons learned on a local, regional, and national basis
- Disseminate successful methodologies and findings of educational approaches that increase access and educational quality
- Take corrective actions as needed

Phase IV: Program Monitoring
- YEARS 2-7 -

- Compile and analyze data on regular basis
- Submit reports on program outcomes to regional and national levels for review

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